Week ending April 25 1953 Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL

Stone Age life in the land of

FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

JOAN GREENWOOD

The star who flouts convention

At last—a "Family" Frigidaire for under £100

No other refrigerator gives you so much for so little money. Keeps food for a whole family Frigidaire-fresh!

This new, low-price refrigerator is the very thing millions of families have been waiting for. The "Family" Frigidaire enables every housewife to safeguard family health . . . prevent food wastage . . . serve better meals . . . get more fun from entertaining. It increases leisure, too—because once-a-week shopping is enough when food keeps fresh till it's needed!

Designed to save kitchen space, this elegant new table-top Frigidaire is a mere 2 ft. square by 3 ft. high. Yet what masses of food it holds! Skilled Frigidaire planning provides more than 4 cu. ft. of storage space—enough for all the varied needs of the family.

But you must *see* the "Family" Frigidaire for yourself to appreciate all its good points. It's on show and on sale now at Frigidaire Dealers, Electricity Board Service Centres and large stores everywhere.

ALL THIS FOOD FITS IN THE "FAMILY" FRIGIDAIRE

Enough perishable food to last the family a week. Top-to-bottom refrigeration is the answer. There's *no* waste space! All this food keeps fresh and wholesome, all of it is protected against germs and deterioration. And remember—more food *inside* your refrigerator means more free kitchen and larder space *outside* for the non-perishable foods.

You get all these features and more in the new "Family" Frigidaire

White acid-resistant porcelain table-top with splash board.

Thrifty "Meter-Miser" power unit—the simplest, most reliable refrigerating mechanism known. Sealed in steel, oiled for life, *uses less current than an ordinary light bulb.* Quiet running; radio and TV suppressed.

Backed by 5-Year Warranty. Every Frigidaire "Meter-Miser" is covered by a full 5-Year Warranty. Usual 1-Year Warranty on cabinet.

Big Super-Freezer stores 12 lb. of ice cream or frozen foods.

Quick-Release Ice Tray makes 14 cubes per freezing.

Adjustable Cold Control for faster ice freezing.

Easy-to-clean interior. Acid-resistant porcelain lining, rounded corners, removable shelves.

Sturdy all-steel cabinet construction.

Gleaming white exterior—wipes clean as a china plate.

Use the top as a table! ▶

The flat top of the "Family" Frigidaire is just the right height to add 4 sq. ft. of extra work-table space to your kitchen. So durable it won't scratch, chip or stain even when slicing bread or chopping meat on it. Wipes clean in a jiffy.

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EDITORIAL

Bundled up

THE approach of summer is causing half the population to change into lighter, cooler and more comfortable clothes. The other half clings to its winter wear.

On the hottest day, this male half can be seen sweating under at least three or four layers of clothing.

This exaggerated conservatism is the despair of the outfitting trade.

MR. THEO HEWITT, secretary of the National Federation of Merchant Tailors, says: "It is perfectly possible to be dressed coolly without looking as if you have just come off a beach."

Tests have shown that on a warm day a man wears clothes weighing an average of six and a half pounds (vest, pants, shirt, tie, sports jacket, flannels and pullover) against his wife's clothing weight of one and a quarter pounds (undies and dress).

MR. HEWITT
Coolness is possible . . .

Lightweight suiting of from nine ounces per yard can be bought. Yet the average of all men's suits in the country is seventeen ounces, only two ounces less than heavyweight worsted.

A London outfitter visiting tropical Brazil says he found the members of a British club there wearing — in a temperature of 100 degrees— exactly what they would have worn in Manchester in January.

SIGNS of greater sanity include reports from clothiers that men are buying more comfortable, if not cooler, clothes.

Waistcoats, which tend to be constricting, are dying. Self-supporting trousers are replacing braces, which can be awkward and unsightly.

Brighter colours, perky bow-ties, check shirts and self-supporting socks have become established in the last few years.

These steps in the right direction have been accompanied by a general move towards looser cut suits, which will not be reversed by the rather silly attempt to stage an "Edwardian" revival.

HAPPINESS in the heat does not involve adopting the extreme recommendations of dress reformers, who would put everybody into shorts.

All men need do is to leave vests, pullovers and waistcoats at home on warm days and take off their jackets on hot ones.

This calls for a certain amount of courage—but the average Briton is surely not lacking in that.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

COWBOY and Indian outfits have not yet been replaced by space suits, and sales at a big London toyshop show that there's time for both a trip to Mars and a battle with the redskins in the garden before tea. Forty-eight year old artist Henry Seabright, who lives in Essex, should know. It is not long since his two sons were at the cowboy and Indian stage. One is now going to be a midshipman in the navy; the other plans to be an artist.

"Oh dear!—one of my precious eggs. Never mind, I can make the floor bright and clean again with a touch of 'Mansion.'"

MANSION POLISH

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Tins 10d. 1/6 and 3/9

FOR DARK FLOORS USE DARK MANSION

LACTA FULL CREAM SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK

is called SPECIAL because extra cream has been added. Unsurpassed for all household purposes where milk and sugar are needed and excellent for the feeding of babies.

★ *During any shortage of canned condensed milk, Regal and Lacta may not be available in all areas.*

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We're having
Silver Shred today!

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Silver Shred

LEMON *JELLY MARMALADE* 11b Jar 1'5D

STANLEY
TOOLS put skill into your hands!

The job's nearly done—one slip now can ruin hours of work! Thank STANLEY tools for the confidence they give as you put those finishing touches to your best work.

OTHER TOOLS IN THE STANLEY LINE include: Planes, Spokeshaves, Hand and Breast Drills, "Yankee" Spiral Ratchet Screwdrivers, 'Phillips' Screwdrivers and Bits, Trimming Knives and Honing Gauges.

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THE TOOL BOX OF THE WORLD

Good and Wet!

For shaving—the wetter the better. That is why Corvette contains a 'wetting agent' that makes water *wetter*. It does this by reducing its surface tension so that it penetrates to every separate hair of your stubble and clings closely to each bristle. You can use *less* Corvette and get *more* softening action. For a better shave use Corvette.

Lather or brushless cream, shaving stick, bowl, refills, after shave lotion, talc. 2/- to 5/6. Made by Goya (Men's Division), 161 New Bond St. W.1

Corvette
shaves you better

FREE SPEECH

The wardens could come to the rescue

AS a warden in the Civil Defence Corps, I have twice turned out with my colleagues to help at fires. All over the country, members of my corps have done valiant work during floods, at mine disasters and at railway accidents.

All this has been unofficial, and although police, fire and ambulance officers are grateful for our help, they are sometimes reluctant to accept it, because we are not officially on duty and cannot claim compensation if we are injured. As one of our wardens put it: "It is time our capacity to help was recognized. We are capable men and women—a ready-made national emergency corps. And we are ready to help in any disaster or case of need." We all agreed that, with very little extra training, we would be invaluable in peace, as well as being ready in case of war.—V. H. M., Suffolk.

Listeners' Choice

MR. FRODSLAM can rest assured that the B.B.C. is very thorough in its assessment of how many listen to its programmes ("Free Speech," April 4). When I was approached by a B.B.C. interviewer, we discussed programmes for half an hour. I was asked which I preferred, and the reasons for my choice. A month later, I received a letter from the B.B.C. asking for corroboration of the fact that I had been interviewed.—MRS. OLIVE MANN, Dean Road, Scarborough, Yorks.

Unfair Risk

MY schoolmaster husband discovered the other day that, for a copper or two a week, one of the boys in his form was insuring his fellows against being kept in. Then my husband had occasion to keep the whole class in. "How does that affect you, Smith?" he asked the boy. "Not at all, sir," came the cheerful reply. "I bar you and Mr. Brown"—another master who is rather free with detention penalties.—MRS. E. M. TOPPING, Leicestershire.

Hikers' Crawl

DRIVING over the Pennines the other weekend, I picked up two youngsters who were hitch-hiking

into Allendale. I was amazed at the size of the packs carried by these fifteen-year-olds. Walking must have been a slow crawl and their breathing and movements must have been impeded. I admire anyone who appreciates the countryside, but there can be little pleasure in going about loaded down like that.—G. P., Jarrow-on-Tyne.

"A large pack need not be a heavy one," says the Alpine Club. "Articles like tents and sleeping bags can be very bulky. The secret is to get the weight on the small of the back. With a decently packed haversack there should be no discomfort at all in carrying 30-40 lb."

Noses On The Wane

WHILE we enjoyed the spring sunshine on the moors the other day, my sister remarked that gorse no longer seems to smell so strongly. When we were children, the air was thick with a scent like almonds; now, we have to sniff the blooms closely, and even then the perfume is faint. I maintain that the sense of smell is more acute in childhood; my sister does not agree. Is it our noses, or the gorse?—MRS. E. M. ASHTON, Caroline Gardens, Camels Head, Plymouth, Devon.

"The sense of smell is highly developed in children, and much less acute in the aged," says a doctor. "In the middle years, it is likely to be diminished by catarrh and nasal infections. Smoking affects it to some extent."

JOHN BULL'S NEW SERIAL

THE MARAS AFFAIR

by ELIOT REED

See announcement on page 12

Misguided Book

THOUSANDS of guide books will be sold to people visiting London for the Coronation. But how many of these books are accurate? In one I bought recently, I read that every British sovereign from Edward the Confessor to George III is buried in Westminster Abbey. But I can list eight who were not. There were plenty of other mistakes. Aren't the facts checked? — EDMUND BURTON, Gleneldon Road, London, S.W.16.

"Guide books published by recognized firms are very accurate," says the British Travel and Holidays Association. "We get very few complaints. But an event like the Coronation brings a mushroom growth of guide books, which are not always so carefully compiled."

Telephones Abroad

WHENEVER I am in England, I hear telephone users grumbling about the cost of calls. I wonder how they would react to Vienna's system of charging? Over here, the person receiving the call pays part of the cost. If a call is made from a public kiosk there is no hope of recovering your money if there is no reply.—L. H. ADAMS, Strohberg Gasse, Meidling, Vienna, Austria.

Retiring To Boredom

MY husband and I have always led busy, active lives. Besides bringing up a family and tackling war work, we found time for tennis, badminton, swimming, dancing and hiking. But we are having to relinquish our energetic hobbies one by one, either because of cost, or because we find them too strenuous now. My husband's retirement is only a year away, and we seem to have little left to keep us from boredom during later years. I still have my needlework—but what will my husband do at home all day? We are wondering how other retired couples have solved the problem.—MRS. D. D., Hornsea, Yorks.

Domestic Daze

ARE we getting more absent-minded in these modern days? My mother went outside to fetch some coal, filled the shovel and promptly popped the lot in the dustbin. We spent quite a time recovering the precious fuel. The next day, my friend filled her hot water bottle with the milk she had heated for coffee.—MRS. E. M. KAY, Greenside Terrace, Leeds, 12.

"Peter" To His Friends

IN the feature "Life With Father," appearing in JOHN BULL for March 28, my Christian name is shown as Arthur. This, admittedly, is one of my names; but that by which I am normally known to all my friends and relatives, as well as throughout the scouting world, is, in fact, Peter. —LORD BADEN-POWELL, Dockenfield, Farnham, Surrey.

Golden Guineas

MANY people visiting my hotel tell me that they regard pricing in guineas as an affectation, or even a catchpenny device. I have to point out to them that there is a sound reason for it in the hotel business. If the weekly rate is priced in guineas (twenty-one shillings) it may be divided by seven, easily and exactly, and the daily rate obtained. —G. S. B., Perranporth, Cornwall.

Gallant Princess

BRIGADIER Durnford Slater mentioned H.M.S. Princess Beatrix in his description of the Lofoten landing (JOHN BULL, March 21). I sailed in

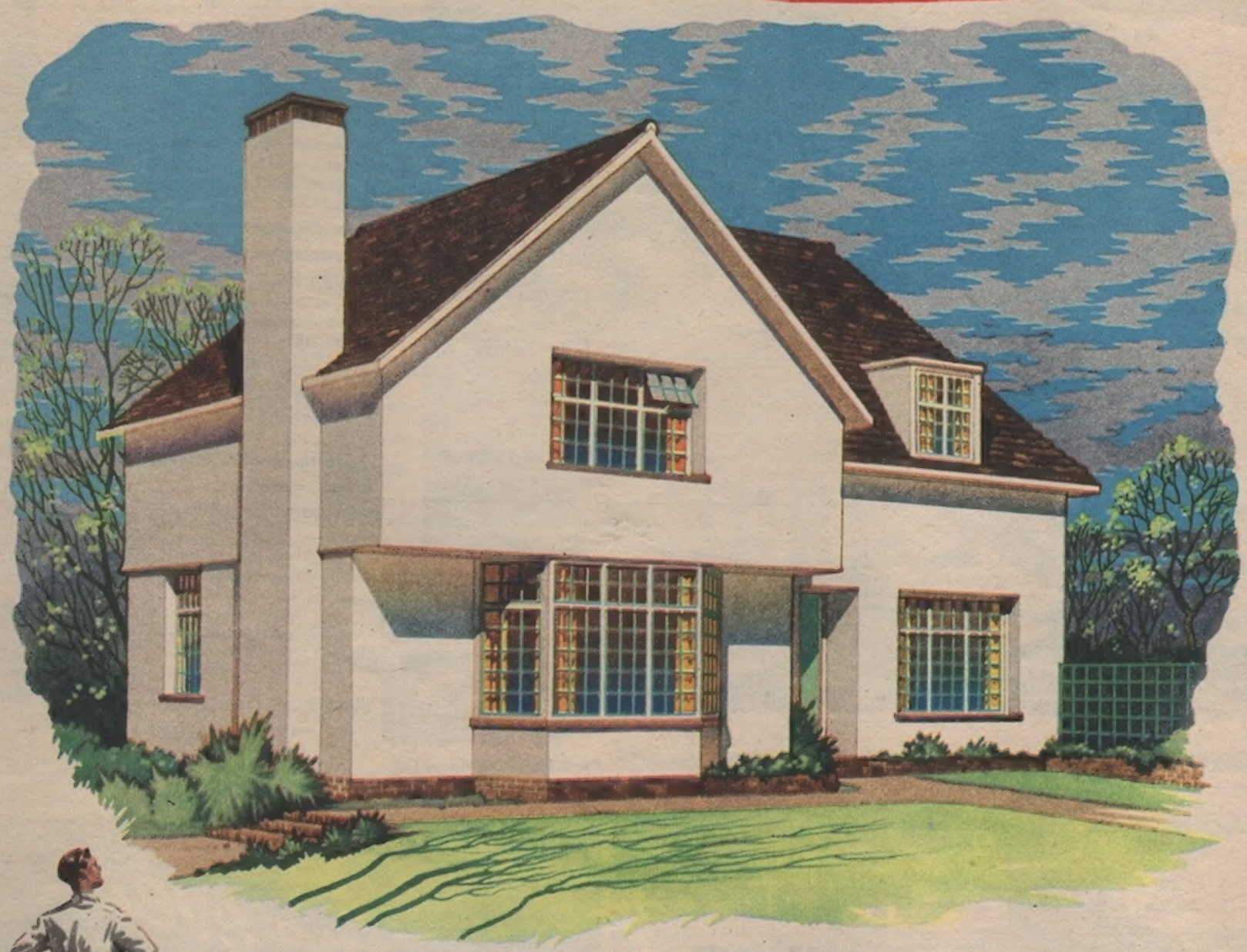
H.M.S. Princess Beatrix at Lofoten in 1941

this gallant little ship when she was doing troopship duties in the Mediterranean in 1943. Reading that she was also at Lofoten makes me wonder just what her war service was. Running up and down the Med. was no picnic in those days. Did she survive?—H. GIBSON, Beech Grove, Ferryhill, Co. Durham.

The Princess Beatrix, built in 1939, was one of two Dutch sister ships on the Harwich-Hook of Holland service. When Holland fell to the Germans she joined the Royal Navy as an infantry landing ship. She took part in the Lofoten and Salerno landings, and for several months in 1943 worked in the "Moonlight Squadron," ferrying reinforcements from Algiers to the hard-pressed First Army in Tunisia. She helped in the D-Day landings and afterwards served in the Far East. Today, with her sister ship, she is back on peacetime service. The concluding instalment of "Commando!" begins on page 13.

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

SPRING-CLEANED OUTSIDE TOO!



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"Smooth" IS THE KEY WORD says UFFA FOX

internationally renowned designer, builder and helmsman, who has done so much for the prestige of British boatbuilding and sailing.

From the smooth curves of a racing yacht . . .

"Before I begin to design a boat," says Uffa Fox, "I must see her in my mind—elegant, alive, *smooth*—going ahead under full sail. Then I put what I see down on paper. I try to make every line of her wholesome and sweet, and every curve so *smooth* that she will achieve that half floating, half flying motion that is pure sailing."

. . . to the smooth smoking of 'a fine cigarette made smoother by cork'

Craven 'A' cigarettes have tips of natural cork added to give you the smoothest smoking you've ever known. How smooth to the lips is that firm feel of cork! Cork cannot stick, cannot slip. It keeps the end of the cigarette firm, dry and easy-drawing to the last.

CRAVEN 'A' VIRGINIA CIGARETTES

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Smooth to the lips . . . *Smooth* to the taste . . . *Smooth* to the throat . . .

If you're living on your nerves

—then read this letter

". . . My nerves had become so tense . . . as a result of overwork, so I decided . . . to do something about it, my first thoughts were Phosferine . . . *I am now feeling as fit as a fiddle again* . . . I have proved its wonderful value."
(*Signed*) *Mrs. G. P., Coalville.*

How PHOSFERINE benefits the nervous system

It is only too easy to go on neglecting yourself when you are overworked, over-worried, or subject to some unusual nervous strain. But it is wiser, at times like these, to make good use of Phosferine. You'll notice, when you take Phosferine, how the appetite improves. This is important—for it is a sign that Phosferine is doing you good, doing your nerves good, giving you the **extra** vitality you need. Get a supply of Phosferine now.

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No one ever says 'No' to Mackintosh's

The Perfect Chocolate-Toffee in the Perfect Pocket Pack

JOHN MACKINTOSH & SONS LIMITED, HALIFAX

The love game in the Youth House at Kimil. The partners "kiss" by rubbing noses together; then the men move on to the next girl, until all have met

FORGOTTEN PEOPLE (2) *by Alfred Vogel*

How boy meets girl in Papua

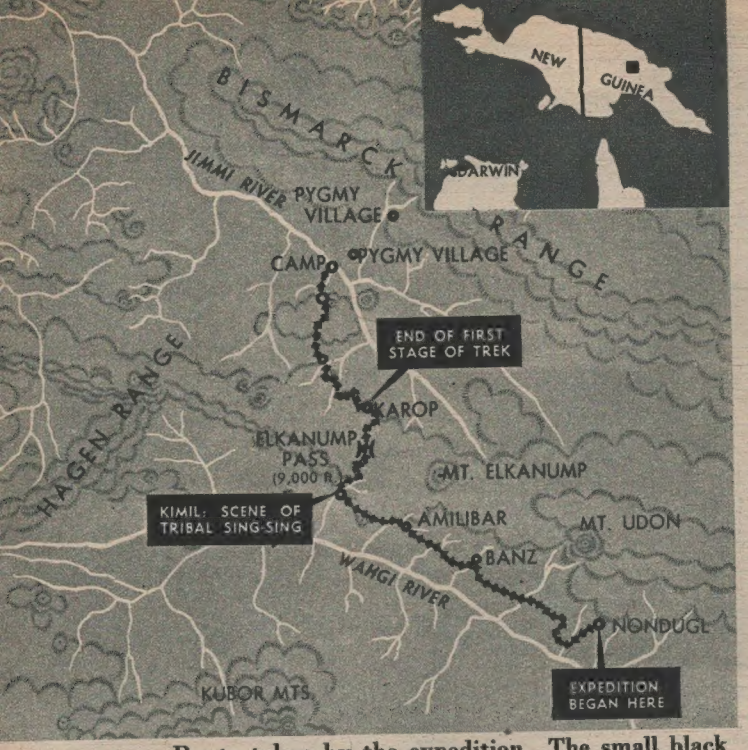
To the Papuan tribal sing-sing come youths in search of brides, husbands seeking more wives. There is no dancing or kissing on this strange night of courting—and no wallflowers, either

AFTER BREAKFAST THE LOADS were distributed, naturally in an uproar, for those who were given awkward things to carry complained to high heaven and then quarrelled among themselves as to how they should carry them. However, the native's mood changes very quickly, like a child's, and after a few words from our leader, Captain Ned Blood, they were all satisfied with their lot for that day. After a last inspection of the police-boys' rifles, the order to march was given and, singing, the long column moved off on the first leg of the expedition.

To reach the Jimmi River, which was the expedition's first objective, we had the choice of two routes: one was across the pass between Mount Bundarn and Mount Udon, both about 12,000 feet, immediately north of Nondugl; the other followed the valley for several days and then left it by the Elkanump Pass, which is only 9,000 feet.

Blood had chosen the latter route for several reasons. In the first place, it gave us the benefit of fairly level country for the first few days; secondly, he was good friends with a *luluai* (chief) in the district immediately north of the Elkanump Pass; and, further, the pygmy tribes living in the eastern parts of the Bismarck Mountains, to which the Bundarn-Udon pass would take us, were nomads who lived by plundering other tribes, whereas the pygmies in the western parts were settled. Lastly, by going through the village of Banz we should be able to meet and obtain advice

A Papuan girl dressed up for the sing-sing. Her waistband shows she is unmarried: holes for nose ornaments are bored in childhood



Route taken by the expedition. The small black square on the inset map indicates the area in relation to New Guinea and north Australia

Women are beasts of burden in Papuan households. This wife—one of five of the man by the fence—carries the family food in a bag tied round her head, her child perched on top

from Mr. Taylor, a former district officer, who had lived there for several years and had had contact with the natives round the Elkanump Pass.

The first day's march was along a very comfortable road, alternately up on high ground covered with stiff kunai grass and then down among groves of trees. It was the hottest day so far, and I have certainly never felt so soaked with sweat as that evening, when we reached Banz after marching twenty-one miles. We were well received by Taylor, the Catholic missionary Father Misic, who was an American, and Mr. Christian, the area's medical assistant. Never have I tasted a more superb drink than the Australian beer they gave us!

Tourist Plan Turned Down

The porters continued in the dark to the village of Amilibar, where we were to spend the night in a guest-house which had been prepared for us. As there was a jeep-track to the village and Father Misic was the lucky owner of a jeep, it was decided that we would prolong our halt in Banz and follow the porters a few hours later.

One of the topics of conversation that evening was the airport and tourist hotel which Qantas Airways had been planning to build in the Nondugl area. This was to be the terminus of the route between Sydney and Lae, which has been flown since the war, and which the airline calls the Bird of Paradise Service. We were all pleased that both the Governor and the authorities in Australia had turned the project down out of consideration for the natives. Experienced old-timers like Blood and Taylor considered that tourist traffic in the Wahgi Valley would, within a few months, turn the natives into beggars or a horde of theatre-savages, commercially exploited to amuse the tourists. It would be some generations, they said, before the natives would be ready to be confronted with irresponsible whites and the degenerates of culture.

After a drive in the jeep that was, to say the least of it, bumpy, and during which we several times crossed streams by fords where the river bed was anything but even, we reached Amilibar just before midnight. At that moment there was a lively fight going on outside the guest-house among several of the porters; Blood's wife, Olga, who had been a nurse during the war, had to sew up a gash from a knife wound and bandage several lesser wounds.

Natives Faced Pain Calmly

The natives seemed capable of standing much greater pain, or, as Blood asserted, to be less sensitive to pain, than white people. Throughout the expedition the porters were continually getting boils the size of plums—so-called tropical sores—on their legs and thighs from all the tears and scratches they got in forcing their way through the thick vegetation. When, at the evening sick parades, Olga Blood cut holes in these and then, with a little scoop, scratched out the pus, her patients sat watching her calmly and without any trace of pain on their faces. That done, an antiseptic powder was sprinkled in the boil's crater and a simple bandage put round it.

Always the patient returned at once to his work, even though the root had gone deep into the flesh and the wound had had to be sewn up. Always, on the following morning, he would be carrying his load along with the rest. There were a few cases of attempted malingering, when the excuse used was that of stomach pain or "evil spirit in the head," but there was never a case of a porter wishing to get off work because of a wound, however bad. Scratches the porters bandaged themselves, covering them with certain leaves which they tied on with plant fibres.

After a good night, I emerged the next morning from the mosquito net round my camp-bed and started on my "wash-wash," a performance which the villagers, who had inquisitively

Two-year old Susanne peers out from her litter. On the right is Captain Ned Blood, her father

assembled in front of the guest-house, no doubt took as a sort of mystical religious ceremony. Our boys had orders that every morning and afternoon they were to prepare for each of us a tub of warm water and a can of cold, the can being fitted with a rose. After I had bathed in the tub, my boy used to give me a cold shower with the can, to the great delight of the spectators, who shrieked aloud with joy. Olga Blood surrounded her ceremony with even greater mystery; her wash-wash, if it could not be arranged in the guest-house, was performed behind screens made of leaves.

After an early breakfast and the inevitable squabbling among the porters over the distribution of loads, the column moved off once more. This was to be a much shorter day's march, but it was to be through much more difficult country. The narrow path wound like a scenic railway over innumerable low but very steep hills—offsets from the mountains we should have to cross to get out of the Wahgi Valley.

Birds That Fly Backwards

The country was now becoming more thickly wooded and there was more animal life. There were several species of colourful small parrots and humming-birds. Some of these were able to fly backwards when, as insects do, they withdrew from one flower in a cluster to get a dive in at the next. Another remarkable thing was the tremendous number of birds of prey, in size and appearance like a buzzard, which circled along the route of the column. My boy, Kaibal, said that they were keeping a lookout for small animals that might be scared from their lairs near the path by the singing and shouting of the porters.

It was still early in the afternoon when, after wading across the Kimil River, we reached the village of the same name. Several tribes had assembled on the open space in front of the guest-house, partly to see the show and to sell us food, and partly that there might be a meeting of the chiefs. The men, who were dressed

and leader of the expedition. Susanne's blonde curls and pink complexion caused a sensation among the Papuan women

Head police-boy Pondo and his family pose with explorer Alfred Vogel. His home, less primitive than most Papuan huts, has woven walls and a fireplace sunk in the floor

in magnificent headdresses of cassowary or bird of paradise feathers and armed with spears, lined our path and welcomed us with loud shouts, brandishing their spears. After that they all wanted to have a so-called audience.

The procedure was that we seated ourselves in our camp-chairs in front of the guest-house and then the men came up one by one, according to rank and distinction, to shake hands. As there were almost three hundred of them, none of whom might be overlooked, it was quite an exhausting performance, and I could only thank heaven that the Papuans did not have equal rights for women. After the ceremony the palms of our hands were sticky and black with dirt and lard.

Pondo—Alias "Mussolini"

The women kept themselves modestly in the background. They squatted with their children in long rows, and on the ground in front of them they had spread out the foodstuffs, mostly sweet potato, maize and bananas, which we were to buy. It took one to two pigs and large quantities of vegetables to feed our hundred or so porters and police-boys, to say nothing of the local porters and interpreters we hired from village to village and the number of hangers-on, impossible to distinguish or segregate, who came with us for a day's march or two in the hope of getting hold of some paper or an empty preserve tin. In charge of all the purchasing was our head police-boy, Pondo, whom—because of his appearance and powers of command over the porters—I had nicknamed "Mussolini."

After the warm part of our wash-wash we took a refreshing dip in the crystal waters of the Kimil River, bathing, as a matter of caution, upstream from the village. Some of the more important chiefs were then given permission—a highly prized privilege—to observe us eating our strange foodstuffs. The success of the conference which Blood was to have with these potentates the following day was assured when they were presented after our meal with empty food and cigarette tins. We drank our evening rum on the veranda, witnessed by a less select public.

On the horizon was Mount Elkanump. Twilight was falling, and here and there on the slopes of the mountain we could see the gleam of village fires. From the opening of a large oval hut on the fringe of our own village came a strong beam of light. The assembled tribes were to take the opportunity, during the two days we and they were to be in Kimil, of holding a sing-sing—a feast with much dancing and eating of pig, and also a suitable occasion for contact between the young people of the tribes. Pondo had made arrangements for the photographer, Douglas Baglin, and myself to witness that night's festivities in the large oval hut, the Youth House.

On the several occasions in the year when the tribes of a certain area meet to discuss common questions and to seal their agreements with a few days' gourmandizing on pig, the opportunity is taken of bringing the young people of marriageable age together in the so-called Youth House, where they spend the night. The Youth House is simply an oval hut with a long fireplace in the middle—so long that at least forty couples can sit facing each other round the fire. Married men are admitted—they are then said to be out on the lawful errand of selecting younger stock to rejuvenate a collection of worn wives—but married women are strictly forbidden even to approach the house while a festival is in progress.

Night In The Youth House

With Pondo as our expert and guide, Baglin and I set off in the dark for the Youth House to study the love game. This had already been in progress for some time, and the drowsy chant could be heard far and wide. The young Papuans in these parts do not know the dance either as an expression of eroticism and preliminary to love-making, or as mere rhythmic play between young men and women. Here in the wilds, dancing is practised only by the grown men, and is part of the ceremonial of war and religion.

Discreetly we slipped in through the opening and crouched down in a corner, keeping our heads as low as possible because of the smoke which, however, did not seem in any way to disturb the performers. It was a strange but weirdly fascinating sight that we saw. There were about forty couples sitting there, each youth a little in front of and close beside a girl, all swaying their naked black glistening torsos in time with the drowsy chant they were intoning: *"Aya, aya, aya. . . ."* All were hung with sparkling ornaments made of shells, glass beads, and the wonderful feathers of the bird of paradise shimmering in the colours of the rainbow. The shifting light and shadow from the flickering fire gave exaggerated relief to the play of the men's muscles, and made the girls' firm breasts stand out as though carved from ebony.

Passed Into An Ecstasy

Kissing is unknown; instead, the couples spent the whole time rubbing their noses together. Thus, gradually, they all passed into a sort of ecstasy when they neither saw nor heard. All eyes were shut, and beads of sweat glistened in the firelight. The ecstasy lasts about five minutes; then one of the men, obviously he who first emerges from it, gives a cry, at which all the men move on to the next girl and start again.

This procedure is repeated again and again for several hours, until each has the partner with whom he began. Then they start on another round and continue so throughout the night, except that now and then—just as at our dance halls—a few couples will steal out into the moonlight and solitude, and it may well be a while before they return. If any damsel should suffer "consequences" from these moonlight walks it is not considered a disaster. The child simply takes its place among all the others and is counted as being that of one of the wives. The sinner loses none of her value as a bride for

Continued on page 25

A wheel for a Queen

by CLEDWYN HUGHES

ILLUSTRATED BY CLIXBY WATSON

Two days and nights he worked to give the May Queen her day of glory. He didn't know then about the real Queen

THERE WAS HARDLY a wheel of any sort which, at some time in his long life, Daniel Davies had not made. For fifty years he had been the wheelwright in the small village which was set in the blue foothills of the Welsh Marches.

When he had been young there had been other wheelwrights in other parishes, but for many years now he had been the only one able to work his craft within twenty miles. To him came all men, out of Shropshire and down from inland Wales, who wanted a wooden wheel made. At that most difficult of all the arts of joinery he was a supreme master. His wheels ran good and true longer than any man's life. The wood of the hub was never attacked by worm or beetle, for it was heart of oak; the spokes never warped in winters of snow or rain or sleet; and the wooden rim which supported the iron band on the outside never came asunder.

On his wheels a great multitude of harvests had been gathered in, and on them crops had been sown, and men carried home from weddings and taken on that last journey to the church beyond the river.

But now the world he knew was changing. Pneumatic tyres had come to stay on the farms and the fields. In some way they were a fitting accompaniment to the internal combustion engines which had ousted the great gentle horses from the fields and the lanes.

FOR a while Daniel Davies had struggled on making the wheels which now no one wanted to use. He made great head-high wheels for farm carts and little wheels for hand-made wooden barrows. He made wheels until his yard was full of them. They were beautifully made, and only needed the iron rim to be put on by Samuels the Blacksmith to be ready for a hundred years of use. But no one came to buy.

When his yard was filled with wheels, Daniel Davies had nothing more to do and that would probably have been the sunset of his life had it not been for the coronation of the May Queen.

Each year, in the village, a maypole was set up made of birchwood, and around this danced all the village children in their best dresses. And after that ancient and colourful ceremony, one of the little girls was crowned Queen of the May.

But there was more to the affair than this simple act of crowning. The little girl was first taken through the village at the head of a procession. She rode in an open coach, which had belonged to the noble family which had owned the Hall. When the last of the line died, the house had been turned into a youth hostel, the estate had been sold, and the coach had been bought for fifteen shillings by Samuels the Blacksmith, who was the secretary of the May Queen Committee.

The coach had needed a little repair to its ironwork, a task which the blacksmith had been delighted to do. Then Samuels had touched up the paintwork, and last year the coach had been used to head the May Queen procession in the hour before the coronation. It had not been pulled by a team of greys or bays, but by Hugh Hughes's blind mare, who was in retirement. She had been led through the village street and had pranced with delight at the feel of work once more.

The young May Queen headed the procession. She

The little blacksmith came up to old Daniel, and there was none of the usual cheerfulness in his voice. "I have important work for you," he said

IT was on the Saturday before the crowning of the May Queen that Samuels the Blacksmith came to the house of Daniel Davies.

The spring evening was cold, with an uneasy wind coughing about the corners of the house in the village where Daniel lived. To the one side was a wheatfield green with growth; to the other was the yard with its wheelwright's workshop in a far corner under a tall plum tree.

Samuels the Blacksmith knocked loudly on the front door of the house; Daniel opened it gently.

"Well, old friend?" asked the wheelwright. Daniel was a tall man and he drooped a little over the step of the door, his face creased in friendliness, the walnut-like wrinkled skin made yellow by the light of the early rising moon.

The blacksmith was a fat and happy man who

rode in the great old open coach that Samuels the Blacksmith had bought for fifteen shillings

usually had a chuckle at the end of his sentences. But this Saturday his voice was harsh with impatience.

"I am glad you are home, Daniel. I have work for you."

"For me? A wheel?"

"Yes, indeed, Daniel. 'Tis the coach which is to carry the queen on Monday. The wheel came to pieces this afternoon when I tried to move the contraption. One minute it was round and sound, and the next the spokes of this wheel had all warped and the rim woods burst out of their bands. Now it is in pieces and I see that the hub is old at its heart."

"You should have put bricks under her, Samuels, old friend, and taken the weight off the wheels."

"Too late to tell me such wisdom, Daniel. The coach is collapsed on its springs in my yard. You will have to make a new wheel by Monday and I must put a rim on in time for the procession."

"By Monday! There has to be craft in such work, and that means love. And there was never any love in work done at high speed."

The blacksmith made no reply, but held his head on one side, as if listening to the wind as it muttered across the new growth in the wheatfield, as it came from the tops of the mountains and shook the petals of the plum blossom white in the moonshine.

He was looking from the door down the village street towards his smithy. There a tractor was being worked on late by his helper; they dealt with the insides of tractors now that there were no horses.

And then he spoke:

"You would let down the old ways?"

"You are a fine one to talk about the old ways, Samuels, old friend. You have stopped making harrows and rakes and the shoeing of horses and now delve into the greasy hearts of tractors."

SAMUELS THE BLACKSMITH smiled in the moonlight. Up the village street by the smithy his helper was welding steel behind a mask, the blue flame spitting into the half-light of the evening.

"I have had to move with the times so that me and mine do not starve, Daniel, but that does not say that I do not love the old ways. We have both of us been born too late."

Daniel Davies was silent for a while, and then he said: "I will try to make the wheel. You will have the forge ready on Monday morning for the rimming?"

"It will be a pleasure to get the old bellows going again, Daniel. I am sick of this oxy-acetylene which can take away a man's eyesight or sear his thumb to the bone. You will be starting tonight?"

"I will. I will come right away to your place for the old wheel."

Together they went up the village street, past the old plum tree and to the smithy with the blue welding-flame at the front of it, and a nobleman's old coach at the back. . . .

For the first time in many years Daniel worked in the dark hours. He lit a paraffin pressure lamp and hung it from a T-square stuck in one of the beams of the wheelwright's shop. Then, under the strong white light, he laid out the broken wheel he had brought from the old coach. He examined it with all the care and love of one master inspecting the work of another. The old wheelwright who long ago had made this wheel had been proud of his work; on the inner side of the hub were carved the initials *D. H.*—and after that a date: 1737. Daniel remembered times when he had done some particular work, and in a like way had carved his mark in some place which only another craftsman would find and see.

The old wheel had been made with skill and graceful balance. Daniel knew that it would take all his skill and judgment and patience to make a similar one between the sixth day of one week and the first of another.

BUT the old wheelwright knew and understood that what he had been given to do this night might be the last work of his life. Wooden wheels were only needed now to carry queens to their coronation and such times came slow and seldom in the years. And as he drew out his templates and steel rules, Daniel began to think of the May Queens of the future who would travel in this coach to the cheers of the villagers. And as he felt and measured the old wheel, lying in its pieces in the sawdust and shavings, he let his mind wander back to the people who had been carried over it from the broken mansion by the ornamental lakes and the ordered coppices: ladies to balls and masquerades, gentlemen to weddings and hunt dinners. . . .

Slowly, as the hours of the Saturday night went by, the hub began to take shape, set with the sockets for the spokes. By Sunday morning the hub had been finished, and the spokes had been carved out by long pulls of the spoke-shave. Then Daniel went to bed and set his alarm clock at a quarter to eleven so that he might attend Matins.

That service over, he returned, in the afternoon of the Sunday, to work on the wheel.

At about three o'clock Samuels the Blacksmith came to see him.

The smith stood in the wide doorway of the workshop, a stranger, almost, in his Sunday black suit and winged collar. But his voice had lost its worry of last night as he said: "You are getting along fine, I see that, Daniel."

"I am, Samuels, old friend. I hope I shall finish in time."

"Never fear, you will, Daniel. I shall light the fire tomorrow morning and get the old watering-cans out."

They smiled at each other, and even a stranger could have seen the joy in these two. Samuels the Blacksmith went away then, and left his friend making the wheel in the little building shaded by the blossoms of the old plum tree.

Daniel worked all that Sunday night and by Monday dawn he had finished the coach-wheel. It was as good and true and as well balanced as any he had made in his lifetime. Carefully he laid the wheel on boards set on top of a wheelbarrow, and bowled it through the

golden light of the spring dawn to the smithy.

The oxy-acetylene welding apparatus was silent; and even the tractors which had their engines in pieces were set along one wall among scrap iron as if Samuels was ashamed of them. But there was a length of smoke going up from the smithy chimney to the honey-coloured sky. And through the open door of the smithy came great heaving sounds as the huge leather bellows was being worked by its long pole handle, its air giving a vitality to the coke fire and sending a welcoming redness to the street.

Daniel shouted: "Here we are. It is all finished."

Samuels the Blacksmith came to the door, a long forge-tongs in one hand. He called: "How fine it looks, Daniel. What a beauty, to be sure. We shall have a morning to remember, you and me, doing this."

"Have you got the right width of iron, Samuels?"

"Perfect, just the thing. Put the wheel on the stand over there."

Daniel laid the wheel on the circular iron disc which the blacksmith had set up in the centre of his shop. This disc was of stout iron, with a hole in its centre into which the hub of the wheel rested. The rim of the wheel lay on the flat bed.

"Righto," said Samuels, "we will start on the job."

THE work they had to do that morning was to put a red-hot circular band of iron as a shoe on the rim of the wheel. This had to fit exactly, and be put on while hot. When fixed, it had to be cooled in a matter of seconds with water. The metal would then suddenly contract, and in doing so would lessen in circumference and grip the wooden rim with an extraordinary firmness.

This "rimming," well done, would stay fast through all weathers until the iron itself had worn out. It was one of the most skilled of the country occupations. If Samuels put on the red-hot rim too loosely, it would not grip even when cooled. And if he fitted it too tightly, then as it contracted it would warp the wheel from a true circle. And this morning there could be no mistakes.

The two old men went at the work with care and speed, but also with a rare excitement. They made little jokes to one another as the metal was heating. And as they fitted it on to the wheel with long pincers they hardly dared turn their eyes away from the sizzling heat.

Then, while Samuels held the wheel perfectly flat on the iron bed, Daniel began to pour water on to the rim from old watering cans held in each hand. And as the steam rose, at this most anxious of moments in the work, they began to sing a song together. Neither noticed that it was an election ballad from the early 1900s.

Then Samuels held up a hand. "Fine, that will do, Daniel."

Anxiously the wheelwright bent by the blacksmith and felt the cold metal with his hard-skinned hands.

"Seems a perfect wedding, Samuels, old friend."

"Like a pea in the pod."

Carefully they bowled the finished wheel to a corner of the blacksmith's shop and leant it against the wall.

The job was done. Slowly, Samuels and Daniel filled their pipes with tobacco and lit them with red-hot pieces of coke lifted off the forge hearth. Now that the excitement and suspense was over, they felt suddenly tired and there was a sadness in the voice of Daniel as he said, between long, slow draws at his pipe: "Well, that is the last wheel we shall ever do together."

Samuels the Blacksmith only nodded; it was as if he dared not trust his voice.

It was then, in the strange yet destined way that things happen in the countryside, that a shooting brake came to a halt in the street outside the smithy.

Daniel said: "Some toff is up early."

"Or up late, Daniel, after some fancy weekend."

Then the door of the car was slammed and a very tall and elderly man came into the blacksmith's shop. Both Samuels and Daniel could see that he was indeed a toff, but not the sort for a weekend spree. He had a great white moustache and a glass in one eye and he wore a sort of cape.

And he spoke first, as if more used to asking than answering.

"Is there anywhere in this place I can get petrol? I'm almost empty. My confounded chauffeur seems to have slipped up."

DANIEL answered: "Well, sir, it is too early yet for the garage to be open, but they will be in half an hour, I dare say."

"I thought you were a garage at first, that's why I stopped. I saw the tractors in the yard."

Samuels smiled. "Oh, no, sir, we do repair tractors, but I am really a blacksmith and my friend here, Mr. Daniel Davies, is a wheelwright."

"Well, you're two of the old school, I can see that, up so early on this fine morning."

"It is something of an exception for us, too, today, sir. We have been seeing to an old-fashioned wheel."

Daniel pointed rather proudly to the new wheel. Immediately, the old gentleman went over to it. Both the blacksmith and the wheelwright could see by the way he felt the balance that he was used to such things. They said nothing to him, and it was only after about a minute that the old gentleman looked up and spoke with a new friendliness.

"What a beautiful job of work."

"You know about the old sort of wheels, sir?" ventured Daniel.

"My heavens, yes I've got three family coaches parked in my stables and they're all useless because one wheel or other has broken. I kept a wheelwright on my estate workshops but he's crippled with arthritis, poor devil, and couldn't make a cotton-reel, let alone a coach-wheel."

The old gentleman paused and stroked the iron rim of the wheel with fondness.

"See, you two, how about fixing up my coach-wheels for me? I live in Shropshire, and I could send a car to fetch you two gentlemen to examine the work and take all the details you want. In fact, I'll get a jeep put at your disposal so that you can go backwards and forwards from here to my place as often as you wish. How about it?"

The two old craftsmen just meekly nodded.

"Right. Excellent. When shall I send the jeep?"

The blacksmith looked at the wheelwright. "Oh, Wednesday would suit, wouldn't it, Daniel?"

Daniel nodded.

"Thank you, sir.'

The elderly gentleman asked what the wheel was to be used for, and smiled when Samuels told him it was for the May Queen's coach.

And as he climbed into his shooting-brake, he wagged a gloved finger at the two old men as they stood rather proudly on the worn brick threshold of the smithy.

"On the wheels you will be making for me will be riding a real queen, when she comes to these western parts of her country."

HE said nothing more except a good morning, and then he was gone in search of the petrol he needed.

Daniel turned to the old blacksmith. "Samuels, old friend. it is like some fairy story."

"And like that, hardly true, Daniel. Let us wait till Wednesday before we tell anyone."

With that, they went and fixed the wheel on the coach in the yard. The wheel turned good and true. Then they painted the woodwork with fast-drying black enamel and silver paint, and the job was done.

That afternoon the coach carried the May Queen very gallantly and there was dancing and a coronation. It was only on the Tuesday, when the excitement was over, that Daniel Davies and Samuels the Blacksmith began really to think about Wednesday. They wondered if it had been some dream of the dawn, or some imagining brought on by the excitement and their own tiredness.

But Wednesday brought the jeep and the messenger. And when they arrived back in the village that evening, both Samuels and Daniel knew that what they had heard was true. On the wood which Daniel was to shape, and which Samuels was to shoe with iron, would travel a queen when she came to the west among her people. And the two old and most excellent craftsmen knew that this was to be the most gracious work of their lives. And they knew, too, that if every other wheel they had made should have become false, these which they had now to create must be like a heart in the loyalty of their running.

THE END

The fantastic story of . . .

THE MARAS AFFAIR

SHADOWED AND SPIED on wherever he went, politely frustrated at every turn by police and censorship—that was the life of Charles Burton, a British newspaperman in an Iron Curtain country.

Burton would have thrown up his job in disgust but for two things.

One of them was his uncanny feeling that something big—perhaps the biggest story of his career—was about to break in this fear-ridden country. The other was Anna Maras.

Anna was the girl who worked for him. And despite himself, despite his typical newspaperman's cynicism, he felt a powerful attraction for her. He knew it was absurd to carry on his thankless job in this sinister capital merely to be near her. But he couldn't help himself. . . .

And then, suddenly, Burton found himself plunged into political violence, gambling with his life in a desperate battle of wits with the secret police. He had unwittingly stumbled on . . .

THE MARAS AFFAIR

That is the title of the tensely exciting new novel of suspense which begins in JOHN BULL in two weeks' time. The author is Eliot Reed, whose gripping *Tender To Moonlight* was first published in JOHN BULL in 1951.

The Maras Affair is short—there are only four parts, each packed with action—and keeps up a breathless pace of shock and counter-shock from start to finish.

JOHN BULL has secured exclusive serialization rights in advance of book publication. Watch out for further details next week.

STARTS IN JOHN BULL, MAY 9

Brigadier Durnford Slater—the first Commando—concludes his story with a vivid account of the D-Day landing and the storming of Germany

THE GREAT ASSAULT ON THE CONTINENT

WHEN I REACHED BRITAIN, on October 30, 1943, there were changes afoot in the Commando organization. Until then there had been only one Royal Marine Commando—the all-volunteer No. 40 which had taken part in Dieppe and Termoli. Now other marine Commandos—a mixture of volunteers and conscripts—were being formed. I was dead against the idea.

Perhaps I was prejudiced. I was proud of the volunteer tradition of the Commandos. More important, I was convinced—in spite of Mountbatten, whose idea this was—that units of conscripted marines could not be expected to maintain the high Commando standards.

There were now four Commando brigades, in which the balance between army and marine Commandos was to be maintained. General Sir Robert Sturges was put in command of the two brigades assigned to the invasion. I was appointed his deputy commander with the rank of brigadier. My special rôle was to look after the interests of the army Commandos and also to supervise planning and training for the landings in Normandy.

In spite of my own feelings, I soon found that my most important task was to promote amity between army and Royal Marine Commandos. Eventually, I am glad to say, as the unsuitable material was weeded out of the marine units and those remaining passed through the tough Commando training mill, the feeling of resentment against them died down. They had to be good men to make the grade.

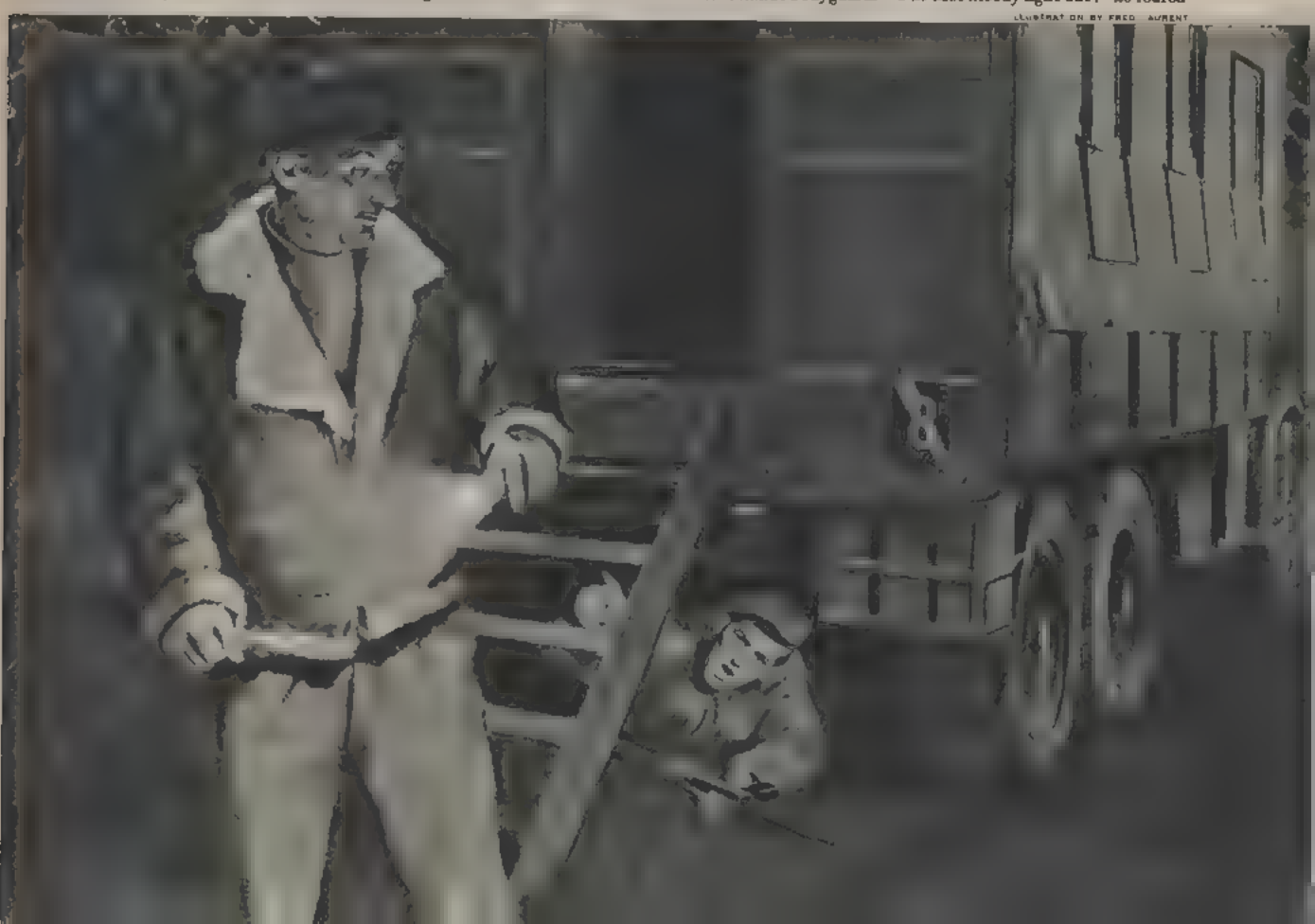
During this period of readying ourselves for the great assault against the Continent, I was determined that those Commando officers and other ranks who had in previous operations taken the most consistent risks should be placed in safer employment. None would hear of it; but, by issuing a direct order, I had George Herbert, John Pooley and Brian Butler posted to our depot at Achnacarry in Scotland.

Johnny Dowling and Lofty King, however, over-persuaded me. They remained with No. 3 Commando throughout. During the next few weeks I had a stream of messages from the three at Achnacarry—each more full of misery than the last. They liked the training, they said, but it was not the same as being in No. 3. Finally I weakened with them, too. Happily, Herbert, Pooley, and Butler went back to the unit.

In April, 1944, Charlie Head was again sent to hospital. His leg wound had not satisfactorily healed. Charlie was a major now, a liaison officer for Commando Group, but he still acted largely as my personal assistant. I received a sad letter from him in hospital. He was afraid he was not going to be able to come with my headquarters to Normandy, and he could not bear to be left out of the show.

"In view of the fact that I'm a very powerful

Unsuspecting, Monty came out of his caravan, flashing a torch. This was too much for the Commando bodyguard. "Put that bloody light out!" he roared



swimmer," Charlie wrote, "I feel I ought to be used in the invasion as a frogman to deal with underwater defences." He meant it.

He was determined to get to France, whether on his feet or under water. I could tell that he was working himself into a state, and at once went to visit him. "If you can get out of hospital, Charlie," I promised, "you can forget about this frogman business. You can come with me."

"I'll get out," he said. He knew that the one sure way of accomplishing this was to make a nuisance of himself. He proceeded to do this with remarkable thoroughness. Two days later, he was back at work.

Last Visit Before Invasion

On June 2, the 1st and 4th Commando Brigades moved into their concentration areas at Southampton. Charlie Head and I motored round, visiting all units. The troops were laughing and singing, and the officers were confident and contented. Charlie and I had a wonderful reception from No. 3 Commando. All the old faces were there: Peter Young, Lofty King, Johnny Dowling, George Herbert, John Pooley, Brian Butler.

"It's nice to have you back with the unit, where you belong," George Herbert said.

It was certainly good to be back, even if only for a short stay. When I left, it was with a feeling of sadness. I was sending them, for the first time, to do the job without me. I suppose this is the peculiar guilt of command. There would be men wounded and killed and I would not be taking the same assault chances as they did. Yet I had a feeling of contentment, too; for here was the greatest combined operation of them all, and we had been the guinea-pigs who had helped to make it possible. From now on, we were no longer on our own for independent sorties against the enemy. We were part of the big show.

At last the line of the French coast could be seen in the grey morning light of D-Day. To the east, the hills behind Cabourg stood out clearly, but straight ahead, where No. 3 Commando was to land, the coast was flat. Everywhere there were boats, from the smallest of landing craft to battleships. Then came the thunder of big guns as the Royal Navy fired salvo after salvo at shore targets.

Showing The Commando Spirit

As the leading craft drew closer, spouts of water bloomed spectacularly around it, indicating that the enemy was hard at work, too. A few tanks could be seen on the beach, their guns spouting flame. Away to the left a tank-landing craft was blazing fiercely while the crew leaped into the sea. Corporal Jennings and Sergeant Osborne of No. 3 Troop sat, fully exposed, in the stern of a landing craft.

"Put your sights up, Jerry," Jennings yelled at the enemy.

A shell whined over the craft and landed a hundred yards beyond it.

"Down a little," Osborne encouraged. "And give her more wind gauge!"

As No. 3 Troop's landing craft ground into the sandy shore, Johnny Dowling led the way down the ramp, running. A moment later a shell burst within a yard of him. He was lucky merely to be wounded in the legs, and was evacuated to England.

Despite wire and obstacles, the Commando was soon assembled under cover of a grey stone house beyond the beach and moved off to the forming-up point, a grove of stunted trees a thousand yards inland. The route lay across flat, marshy ground. Enemy mortar and artillery fire slowed the advance. Fortunately, the soft nature of the ground minimized its effect. Casualties were few.

When Lieutenant Cowesón, a section commander, was severely wounded, Sergeant Lofty King took over. He was to command the section in an officer's capacity for three weeks. Lofty could have had a commission any time he liked, but always turned it down when offered one.

I, myself, left the beach through a narrow gap in Hitler's iron wall. The first field I crossed held a dozen dead cows, legs pointing stiffly skyward. To our left a noisy battle was being waged as No. 48 Royal Marine Commando attacked one of the enemy's major strong points at Langrune. After suffering severe casualties, they reduced the strong point. Traffic was now moving freely through the beach exits, but the landing had been no walkover.

A military policeman drove me to our H.Q. in an orchard near Creuilly. Charlie Head and Charlesworth, my former batman, who had been wounded with Head in Sicily, had everything snug and comfortable. Charlie's leg was terribly lame: he had no business being there at all.

He and Charlesworth—each wearing a bulky steel brace on an injured leg—had come ashore in an American landing craft. As they had gone down the ramp, an American captain, who had spotted their steel braces, shouted to Charlie: "Say, don't you and the corporal turn around when you get on the beach. If you do the Germans will think this is Dunkirk all over again."

Lord Lovat's Men Hold On

Charlie and I went off to visit No. 1 Commando Brigade, commanded by Lord "Shimi" Lovat. They were holding the ridge on the left flank, near Le Plein, against fierce, repeated counter-attacks. Both their flanks were open and they were under continual fire. (Their flanks were not properly sealed for five days—until the build-up had given us enough troops to go round. They had a hell of a pounding in the meantime, but didn't budge an inch.)

Shimi was magnificent. Every time a mortar bomb burst I jumped a couple of feet, while he stood rock still. I felt thoroughly ashamed.

A runner came rushing up from No. 4 Commando. "We're being heavily counter-attacked, sir," he said to Lord Lovat.

"Tell Four Commando to look after their own counter-attacks, and don't worry me until things get serious," Shimi said. We then resumed our conversation.

As Charlie and I left for our own headquarters, I said, "You know, Charlie, I was damn' windy then."

"Me, too," Charlie replied seriously. "Do you suppose we're getting old?" Of course, the real trouble was that we had not seen action for a long time. It is more difficult to remain unmoved when you come up from the back areas than it is for the man in the front line. Lovat, living in the constant atmosphere of danger, had long since attuned his mind and body to the required pitch.

Charlie Head: though crippled, he schemed his way out of hospital to join the D-Day landing

Commandos move in on D-Day. "I felt content,"

Charlie and I had a quick meal, picked up a Bren gun and returned to Shimi with the offer to man a post for the night. We were anxious to prove ourselves again.

"No, thank you," Shimi said, and meant it.

On the way back, I suddenly saw a huge German standing by the roadside. "Shoot him if he moves an inch!" I shouted to Charlie, and drove the jeep straight at him.

The German's hands flew up. "*Kaput!*" he said, with surprising meakness for such a giant. He had been sent through our lines as a sniper, but, as his heart was not in the work, he was delighted to be taken prisoner.

Handed Pistol To Prisoner

When we reached H.Q., "Lucy" McGovern, who was then acting as my driver-batman, covered the German with a pistol while we interrogated him. Our prisoner was wearing a particularly fine lumber-jacket.

"You ought to have it," Charlie decided on my behalf. He told McGovern to strip it from the German. In order to do so, the driver unthinkingly handed his pistol to the prisoner. The situation was ludicrous: a German prisoner with a loaded revolver, faced by two unarmed British officers and a private soldier. Fortunately, this particular prisoner had no guts at all. He surrendered his jacket. Then he handed back the gun.

My daily routine was to visit both our brigades, finding out their needs, arranging for replacements, and dealing with their problems on the spot.

They had heavy casualties just after the landing, but most shocking to me personally was the news that Brian Butler, John Pooley and George Herbert were all killed early in the fight: John Pooley while leading an attack against an

writes Slater. "This was the big show, and we were the guinea-pigs who helped make it possible"

Slater (left) and Derek Mills Roberts in Normandy

enemy battery; Brian Butler, battling gallantly, on the very day he was promoted to the rank of major; and George Herbert personally leading a determined—and successful—counter-attack. George was last seen advancing, roaring like a lion, firing a Bren from the hip and knocking the Germans right, left and centre, until, finally, he was himself shot through the heart.

All three had been with me from the early days. They were my friends and advisers. It was because they had chanced their lives too often in the past that I had posted all three to the safety of the depot. Why, I mourned, had I allowed them to argue their way back into battle? I wished with all my heart that I had turned a deaf ear to their pleas.

One day, during this heavy fighting, Monty opened the door of his caravan—his headquarters were also near Creuilly—and was surprised to see a fully armed German soldier emerge from a wood about fifty yards distant. The German's only desire was to surrender, but the incident touched off fireworks among the security men. I was summoned by General Dempsey. "There's been a serious breakdown in security in Monty's camp," he told me. "I want you to find a Commando troop to keep a proper guard on him. But, remember, Monty must know nothing. He hates having a lot of people around."

The Sentry Was Nervous

I selected a good troop from No. 41 Royal Marine Commando and told Charlie Head to look after the details. Charlie arranged for the men to conceal themselves in the wood near Monty's caravan. He also had a hole dug under the caravan when its occupant was elsewhere, and saw to it that it was camouflaged during the day. Charlie's scheme was for one of the marines to occupy this hole at night and from it to shoot any unauthorized person who might approach.

A marine duly took up his position at dusk on the first evening. At about eleven o'clock that night, Monty emerged from the caravan, flashing his torch. Keyed to fever pitch because of the importance of his assignment, the marine found this too much for his nerves to stand. "Put that bloody light out!" he roared.

Monty hurried back to his caravan. He did not venture out again that night. In the morning, however, he ordered the entire troop to return to their normal duties.

A period of static warfare now set in while the Allies held the bridgehead and built up their forces for the breakout. But at last, in mid-July, the assault began. We occupied, in quick succession, headquarters at Tilly, Lisieux and Evreux. By August 26 the enemy was over the Seine. The First Commando Brigade had been in the fight for eighty-three days without being rested. Of 146 officers and 2,252 other ranks who had landed on D-Day, 77 officers and 890 other ranks had become casualties.

Retired—But Not Out

By this time, Charlie Head's leg had become so bad that it was obvious he had to leave us for treatment. He had dinner with General Dempsey on his last night. Everybody was very depressed at losing him. We tried to drown our sorrows in alcohol, but without success. Next morning everyone felt close to tears as Charlie limped off to his jeep.

"I don't know what I'm going to do, John," he kept saying. "Don't send me home." But Charlie could, by now, scarcely walk. His leg had swollen terribly. I was afraid he would die without proper medical attention.

In mid-September, 1944, I was posted back to England to help No. 1 Commando Brigade to reorganize for the Far East; but, just before Christmas, the Battle of the Bulge pulled the Brigade back into Belgium. I resumed my duties running a small headquarters linking up with General Dempsey's organization at Achel.

There was stiff fighting. Brigadier Derek Mills Roberts held command of the Brigade. He was an invigorating companion and used to like to walk me round in the snow in full view of the Germans, indicating to me the accomplishments of the previous night. One night, No. 46 Commando killed an entire section of Germans. When I saw them in the morning they were lying in the snow in perfect formation. An enormous German lance-corporal in the centre of the section had been carrying a Panzer-faust anti-tank weapon—somewhat like our bazooka. Derek turned him over with his foot. "He's no sissy," he said, with a certain amount of pride.

In March the Brigade was concentrated on the west bank of the Meuse, and it was here that the final training for the Battle of the Rhine began. The assault was planned as an amphibious operation over that last great natural barrier into the very heart of Germany.

At 22.00 hours on March 23 the first Buffaloes lumbered over the bank and into the fast-flowing water, loaded with Commando soldiers. They fought their way into the town of Wesel, which had been saturation-bombed by the R.A.F. Now the entire might of the Allied Armies was pouring over the Rhine. The First Commando Brigade kept on the move, never staying in one place longer than a day.

Captured City In A Day

On April 4, No. 3 Commando led an attack on Osnabruck. Within twenty-four hours the largest German city yet occupied by British forces was captured.

The end was approaching. On April 10 the Brigade proceeded to a small village near the River Aller and planned another assault crossing. They hoped to rush a railway bridge half a mile north of a road bridge which the Brigade was to secure. When the time came, however, the railway bridge was partly blown by the enemy. Despite this, the leading troop of No. 3 Commando scrambled across and attacked an enemy guard on the river's bank. The Brigade pushed ahead offensively, advancing to a knoll in heavily wooded country half a mile east of the river.

Here they ran into German marines who had

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AFTER THE FUNERAL

by AGATHA CHRISTIE

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

With his identity revealed, Poirot knew he would have to change his tactics. One of these people was a murderer—now on guard

HERCULE POIROT, the great Belgian detective, was investigating the deaths of two people—Richard Abernethie, a wealthy business man, and his eccentric sister, Cora Lansquenet. Richard had died "suddenly, at his residence." Cora had been hacked to death with a hatchet.

Poirot had installed himself at Enderby Hall, the Abernethie country mansion, passing himself off as M. Pontarlier, an interested buyer. Of the family, only Helen, Richard's sister-in-law, who had stayed on at Enderby after her brother's funeral, shared the secret.

Nobody had questioned the naturalness of Richard's death until just after the funeral. While the will was being read to the assembled family at Enderby, Cora had suddenly put her head on one side, as she always did when she was going to say something deliberately shocking, and chirped: "But he *was* murdered, wasn't he?"

Poor Cora had been unwise to talk of murder. Next day she herself was found dead in her country cottage, her skull smashed in.

It was Mr. Entwhistle, Richard's solicitor, who persuaded Poirot to take the case. At first Poirot had stayed in the background, sifting the facts. Were the two deaths connected? In his last days, Richard had distrusted the family—especially the younger generation; and, according to Miss Gilchrist, Cora's spinsterish companion-help, he had told Cora that someone was trying to poison him. Miss Gilchrist had hardly made this statement when she herself was poisoned—by wedding cake sent anonymously.

Miss Gilchrist recovered, but the incident gave Poirot cause for speculation. He was also intrigued by something Mr. Entwhistle told him about the scene at Enderby on the day of the funeral. Helen Abernethie had felt there was something "wrong" about that scene. It wasn't only Cora's remark, but . . . some detail out of place. She had promised to let the old lawyer know when it occurred to her.

Before going to Enderby, Poirot had checked on the family's alibis for the time of Cora's death. Not one of them had stood the test.

To get all the suspects under one roof, he asked Helen to invite them to Enderby Hall—ostensibly to take their pick of the furniture before it was auctioned. It was after Poirot had made this suggestion that Helen, with unwonted clumsiness, had dropped a glass case of wax flowers and smashed it.

Reluctantly, she agreed to Poirot's plan. Clearly, he had something up his sleeve. . . .

PART 6

Invitation To Enderby

MICHAEL tossed the letter across the table. "What about it?" he said. Rosamund said: "Oh, we'll go. Don't you think so?"

Michael said slowly: "Yes, it might be as well. As a matter of fact, I would like to make a sketch or two at Enderby—particularly in that

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"U.N.A.R.C.O. is all nonsense, isn't it?" said Rosamund. "You're a detective." Poirot said nothing. There was a moment of extraordinary tenseness

Lindsay Hassett, my irrepressible skipper

by IAN JOHNSON

The jovial clown of cricket knows how to rise to a crisis. Australia's greatest batsman since Bradman, he has subdued his natural zest to fill a new rôle

Ian Johnson (right), himself a famous Australian Test player, shares a joke with Lindsay Hassett

WHEN THE INDIAN cricket team last toured Australia, political relations between India and Pakistan were severely strained. Nevertheless, during one of the Tests, the Pakistan High Commissioner invited the Australian and Indian players to a cocktail party. The Indians appeared, but made it plain that they were there only in the stern course of duty. Soon the atmosphere became difficult.

Then, just as an international incident seemed inevitable, one member of the Australian team started singing a song. It went down wonderfully well. Not to be outdone, the High Commissioner replied with another song—but he went one better, for he sang it while standing on his head. The rest of the evening went with a swing.

The Australian singer was Lindsay Hassett, one of the world's best batsmen, and captain of this year's visiting Test team. Thirty-nine year old Arthur Lindsay Hassett knows the value of joviality in keeping taut tempers from snapping, both off and on the field.

Saved By His Fooling

During the third Test at Old Trafford in 1948, he dropped a catch from Cyril Washbrook. The situation was critical. He was fielding at deep square leg, and later another big hit from Washbrook sailed into the air towards him.

"Catch this one!" called Ray Lindwall, who was bowling. But Lindsay dropped it again. Quickly he turned round, snatched up the helmet of a policeman who was enjoying a few minutes relaxation sitting on the ground, and stood hopefully with it upturned in his hands. Everyone, fieldsmen and spectators, rocked with laughter. After the clowning, he quietly relegated himself to the obscurity of deep long leg.

But he can rise to the grimmer crises of captaincy, too. Playing at Calcutta during a period of rioting, he was suddenly faced on the cricket field with a horde of insurgents. Some of their leaders had been shot, and they demanded that the game be stopped. The calm, long-faced little man looked mildly at the angry Indians. "Have any of you fellows got a cigarette?" he asked. They went quietly.

Despite his lack of height—he is only five feet five inches—Hassett has always been an all-round sportsman. In his youth he was an outstanding Australian Rules footballer (the tough game which combines both soccer and Rugby); he is an accomplished golfer with a handicap of four, a first-class squash racquets player, and a serviceable lawn tennis man.

His interest in tennis was partly responsible for his disastrous "duck" in the second Test at

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The Hassett the crowds remember: hitting a boundary off Edrich at the Oval during the last Australian tour of Britain. In recent years, he has locked away his more spectacular strokes

Monsoon Pearl

by ***JOHN KRUSE***

ILLUSTRATED BY SHOWELL

The man who owned it once saved my life; now I might have to save his. Such a pearl could bring prosperity—or a knife in the back

THE MONSOON RAIN slapped down, exploding in a fine mist on the roadway. It hung like a bead curtain across the doorway and splashed me where I sat inside. The smell of it was everywhere, like warm, rotting vegetation.

I was sitting in a water-front café in Colombo, Ceylon. The monsoon always made a wallflower of me; I just had to sit it out and wait for the sea to calm. The big combers that came rolling in over the reefs day and night churned up a fog underwater which made my job—spear fishing—impossible.

I was just wondering whether I should pack up my gear and hitch east to Trinco, where they don't get the south-west monsoon, when a chunky, sun-wrinkled man in a battered bush hat came in. I grabbed him by the arm. "Candleblow!"

He blinked his watery blue eyes at me. "By all that's holy—Mike Gardener! How are ya, cobber?" he said, seizing my hand in both his and pumping it. "Gosh, it's good to see you!" He peered shortsightedly over his shoulder, hooked a chair round with his foot so he could see the door, and sat down, still pumping my hand.

"How'vya been, fella?"

"Fine," I said, thinking how quickly pearl diving ages a man. Candleblow had never got his voice back. He spoke with only his breath, somehow, in the back of his throat, with the noise a rasp makes on soft wood. He had got that way saving my life.

WE had been skin divers together a couple of years back, up at the pearling grounds at Mannar. Smith, his name was then. You have to dive in pairs up there because of the sharks, and we were down on the bottom together, me lifting shell and him on guard, when a big blackfin took a lunge at me. Smith plunged his spike up into the shark's belly. It did a back flip and slapped him across the throat with its tail as it made off. It did something to his vocal chords. He'd gone by the name of Candleblow ever since.

"Bring the bottle," I shouted to the proprietor.

"Ah, ah. Not today, pal," Candleblow said. "I just came in for some fags."

I scrubbed the order and stared at him. "Sick?"

The Australian laughed. "Got to keep sober. Big things afoot."

"What sort of things?"

"Oh, things. How are ya, Mike? Still the lone spear fisherman?"

I nodded, wondering why he kept watching the door. "And you? Still diving?"

"I've quit."

"Since when?"

"Since today."

I laughed. "You packed it in that time at Mannar, remember? You were going back to Australia, had it all saved up, remember? You never even got clear of the waterfront."

"Go ahead and laugh. I tell you I'm quitting. There's a tub pulling out for Sydney tomorrow afternoon, and I'm going on her. I ain't even sniffing a cork till I'm on board."

I smiled at him.

"I wish to hell you would, Candleblow. How're the eyes?"

"Terrible. They're getting worse all the time. I'm all washed up, Mike. Pearl diving's all right when you're young. But I've had too much sleeping wet, too much Tamil-cooked skilly, too much air from a rubber hose—or maybe not enough. My lungs taste like the inside of a rotten auto tyre. No, cobber, when you're past it, you're past it, and I'm quitting."

I looked at him, knowing his trouble. Each time he drew his ten per cent of the pearl money, he had been going to quit; but by the time he'd paid back his advance and celebrated his having quit, he never seemed to have quite enough left for the fare home from Ceylon.

The slashing rain was like an electric shock on my skin; the sea looked dark, angry—and dangerous. But it was too late to turn back

I looked at his friendly face, the colour of a walnut, and his blue eyes, a little worried-looking, and hoped that this time he'd make it. If he didn't I knew—and he knew—that sooner or later he'd wind up like the rest, minus a leg, maybe, or an arm; or curled up like a leaf with paralysis.

"How are you fixed, Candleblow?" I asked.

A queer look came into his face. "I dunno," he said. "Pretty good, if my guess is worth a bob."

"You mean to say you haven't got the dough?"

"I mean I don't know."

My impatience must have shown, because he glanced about him, leaned towards me. "Look, Mike, I'm a pretty excited guy. I got a gambling blister!"

A GAMBLING blister! That surprised me. A blister is a swelling on the inside of the valve of an oyster. It is caused by a pearl becoming overlaid by the continually forming shell nacre. Sometimes the nacre builds up flush all around and buries the pearl completely, and you can't tell it's there. But if the pearl is big enough, it forms a blister in the nacre. It is a "gambling" blister because it's often auctioned blind.

"I can't flash it in here," he said, sideways, "but it's a beauty!"

"How did you get it?"

"I got to be ruddy careful, Mike. Could you promise not to blab? No. Don't answer that. I'll tell ya. I been diving for Olaf Peterson."

"That swine!"

"That swine. I been with him ever since you left. We just got off a trip."

"But the season ended in mid-April."

"That's right."

I stared at him. "Poaching, huh?"

He nodded.

"But how about the Customs?" I said. "Do you mean to tell me they let a fully equipped pearling lugger put in to Colombo with a cargo of shell in the middle of May?"

"Who said anything about a lugger? We got a motor cruiser. And we weren't carrying no shell. Pearls only, were our orders. I tell you, cobber, this was some set-up. When we hit port, Olaf was lounging back on deck smoking a cigar as thick as your wrist, with six big tuna strung up around him. The boat was cluttered up with fishing gear; we were the crew. The Customs looked us over, but there was nothing for 'em to see."

"But how about the air pump, the diving gear?"

"In a submarine canister towed underneath," Candleblow explained. "It's still there, ready

The girl slipped in silently. Candleblow didn't see her. He was on his feet now, watching the Indian's hands. Slowly, the pearl began to emerge

for the next trip—the gear, that is. The pump's built into the engine."

I whistled. "So that's how it is. That stuff's not for you, Candleblow."

"You don't have to tell me, cobber. I didn't find out till I'd spent the advance; then it was too late. Anyway, I'm through with all that now."

You hope, I thought. Quitting wasn't so easy when you were in that deep.

"How did you pick up the blister?" I asked him.

"You'll never guess. Off the bottom. When I saw that blister, I knew it was a sign from heaven telling me to pull out."

"You know what'll happen to you if the crew finds out you got something and didn't split it?"

"Those dirty Tamils? Look, Mike, I been in this game too long not to know I'm on a knife-edge. From now on everything's set dead against me. If the crew finds out, they'll slit me open like a sack of corn. Olaf will be more subtle; he'll just fix it so I starve. The pearl doctor I take it to will try and blackmail me, and the buyers will gang together and not bid against one another. I tell you, Mike, pulling out from here is going to be just about the toughest job of my life."

"I'm glad you realize it," I said. "Now I'll tell you something. I'm not letting you out of my sight till you climb that gangplank tomorrow. I'm going to watch every move you make. And if you screw it up I'll break your neck!"

Candleblow's face wrinkled all over like a sea lion's neck.

"Good on ya, cobber! Watch me; I want you to. I'm going to play this like you'd play a game of chess, move by move. I'm going to play this real good."

GOING out into the rain was like stepping under a waterfall. With one slap, it plastered our clothes to our skin.

We went up through the fort district and on into the poorer quarter. Presently, without any warning, Candleblow turned up a flight of steps and into a house. I got a glimpse of a concrete front streaked with rust, then we were in a dark, narrow hall. There was a lot of noise coming from upstairs, and the air was sickly with the smell of ghee.

On the first landing three Indian women in saris were splashing about with buckets. The rain was coming fast from somewhere. A thin fellow in a crumpled alpaca jacket and house slippers was flitting about and jabbering instructions.

"Where can I find Mr. Batliwallah?" Candleblow called up to him.

The Indian turned sharply. He wore gold-rimmed glasses. "I am he," he said in a finicky voice. "You wish to see me?"

"If you got the time."

The Indian issued a final burst of instructions and came downstairs. He glanced sharply from one to the other of us as he passed. He led us back to the ground floor. "Terrible bad business," he said over his shoulder. "We are quite flooded out."

He took us into a small, dark apartment and shut the door.

"You are very wet. Excuse me." He kicked back the Afghan rug, looked up penetratingly as he was doing it. "I don't believe I know you two gentlemen."

"You don't," Candleblow said, and that was that. He glanced round the room at the hair sofa, the screens, the cheap Indian furniture, felt in his pocket, and brought out the blister.

The Indian adjusted his glasses with one hand

Candleblow gasped when he saw what the Indian had dropped on to the table. It was his own pearl

and took the blister with the other. He turned it slowly between his fingers.

I hadn't seen it before. It was big, all right, about the size of a walnut, black and dirty-looking.

The Indian carried it over to the window. Candleblow went with him. "Why are you bringing this to me?" Batliwallah said, holding it up to the light.

"I heard you were good with these things."

The Indian said nothing. He shook it, chipped at it with his thumbnail. He had craftsman's hands, large, precise, with surprisingly fresh-looking fingers. There was something strikingly dexterous about them. The rest of him was nothing—clerkish, wasted, faintly disreputable. It was as though the hands had drained the goodness from the rest of his body.

He handed the blister back to Candleblow and looked at the pair of us without any expression.

"Well?" the Australian said.

"Well, what?"

"What do you think of it?"

"Really, indeed"—the Indian smiled and shrugged—"what does one think of such things? Merely that they are gamblers' toys. Sometimes they are containing a pearl of worth; nine cases out of ten, they are not. If you mean, will I buy it—I will give you three hundred rupees for it. You will not get more."

"I haven't come here to bargain, Batliwallah," Candleblow said. "I came here to have it scraped."

"Really?" The Indian pretended to be surprised. "But I do not do private work. It is too dangerous. If you are wanting it done, you should have gone first to Mr. Ganga, the jeweller. He is my employer."

"I thought you Indians were smart," Candleblow said. "If I took it to Ganga, you'd have to do it on salary. This way you'd get a commission."

"A commission would be no good to me in prison. I will give you five hundred rupees for it, though I am probably a fool."

"You are no fool," Candleblow said, "and I'm not, either, so let's quit fencing around. If you'll agree to work on it, I'll give you five per cent of what the pearl fetches."

Batliwallah unhooked his glasses and breathed on them. "And if it is a baroque, fetching nothing?"

Candleblow hesitated. "I'll pay you a hundred rupees for the work."

The Indian replaced his glasses with a mixture of reproach and contempt. "I see that you are not understanding about the work. One man in millions can do it. It requires the highest skill." He paused. "Five hundred rupees and twenty per cent."

Candleblow looked at me. The Indian was interested; that meant the blister had promise. The two of them started to bargain.

It took twenty minutes. The Indian settled finally for ten per cent and a guarantee of 250 rupees—nearly £20. They wrote out a contract and both signed it. They were cagey as a couple of mountain cats. Ten minutes later, work on the blister began.

We sat on two chairs in front of the desk. We were too excited to feel cold or wet.

Batliwallah flicked on a work lamp, laid a piece of white card on the desk, and emptied a roll of files and blades on to it. He changed his spectacles for a pair with thicker lenses and started to work.

First, with a knife, he scraped away the serrated remnants of the outer shell. They came away quite quickly, leaving him with a slightly oblong, discoloured ball. He exchanged the knife for a file and began to erode the protruding ends.

He worked quickly, turning the blister from end to end, until he had worn it into an almost perfect sphere. He rolled it about on the card, evened it up a bit more.

When he was satisfied, he straightened his back and took a deep breath. It had taken him half an hour.

I don't think either of us had moved till then. We shifted our cramped positions. Batliwallah eased his glasses down his nose to increase their magnification, glanced quickly at us, and went on.

He worked now with a polishing movement of the file, rotating the blister continually in order to maintain its roundness.

The rain kept up a continuous tattoo on some dustbins out at the back. A clock struck two somewhere. We hadn't eaten. I watched the blur of the file. It was crazy that our lives could depend on such things.

The whole of the outer crust had gone now, leaving a greyish ball about the size of a marble. Candleblow's eyes never left it for an instant. I had never known him to go so long without a cigarette.

By five o'clock Batliwallah had something that looked more like a pearl. It was much reduced in size, still grey, but with a silver sheen to it. He was using the finest file I had ever seen, and the work was much slower. An hour passed, and the sphere diminished still further.

Suddenly I caught a whitish gleam breaking through the grey. Candleblow saw it, too.

"It is only the underskin," Batliwallah said.

We watched the spot spread slowly under the file until the whole pearl gleamed an unnatural silvery white. Candleblow controlled himself very well. He had lived with pearls long enough to know that a lot of things could happen yet.

A girl in a sari slipped silently into the room with tea and wheatcakes. Seven o'clock, eight, nine, chimed the distant clock through the rain, with all the time the steady scratching of the file.

The girl returned, cleared away the remains of the food, and departed as silently as she had come. Candleblow was on his feet now, eyes fixed on the Indian's gently working hands.

Slowly before our eyes the true pearl dawned. No other word can describe the process. She came up out of the silver with a creamy glow which took our breath away. We watched each stroke of the file with the agonized fear that it would reveal some discoloration. A single dark spot would halve the value.

Batliwallah worked around her carefully, his face showing nothing. Then he was finished, and there was again the business with the glasses. He turned her slowly under the magnifier, turned her again, passed the pearl and the glass across to us.

"You are usually so lucky?" he asked. "She is perfect; not large, but perfect."

Candleblow uttered a sort of strangled grunt, as though somebody had slugged him. Then he was hunched over the pearl with the glass, trying to look at it, but he was shaking so much he couldn't get the focus. He thrust them both towards me. "Oh, Gawd! Here, cobber, you look. Oh, Gawd in heaven!"

The polishing, the final rolling between oiled palms, was over. We stood around the desk and gazed at the dewy lustre of the finished pearl as it lay in the tray of the scales. Batliwallah was working out some figures.

Finally, he said, "Approximately eleven hundred pounds sterling."

Candleblow punched one hand into the other palm, and shook hands with us with his lips turned in as though he were going to cry.

"As an interested party," Batliwallah said, smirking, "might perhaps I know where you are intending to sell? You see, I should like for Mr. Ganga to have first chance to buy. He pays a very good price."

Candleblow looked suspicious. "Are you after more commission?"

"My dear sir! He is my employer. It is merely a matter of etiquette. If you are not having objection, I could speak with him tomorrow morning."

Candleblow considered. "Tell him," he said, "that when he opens up, I'll be there on his doorstep."

The Indian smiled. "Ah, very good, gentlemen." He picked up the pearl with a pair of forceps and dropped it into a small chamois bag and put it away in the drawer of his desk.

"Hey! What the hell are you doing?" Candleblow demanded.

"It will be safe here tonight. Tomorrow it will be waiting for you at Mr. Ganga's."

"Don't make me laugh," Candleblow said

Continued on page 28

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Joan Greenwood —'Crackers' to her friends

by NORMAN PHILLIPS

Waywardness earned her the affectionate nickname. But she outlived Shirley Temple parts—and her lack of inches—to become a star

GUESSING WAS IN FULL SWING during TV's *What's My Line?* one Sunday evening when Jerry Desmonde looked down his long and eloquent nose and stole a glance at the new member of the panel on his left. What he saw caused the expressive Desmonde eyebrows to rise. Instead of listing clues on her notepad, Joan Greenwood was happily doodling away at a caricature of Gilbert Harding.

Doodling is a failing that the diminutive actress inherited from an artist father. It helps to conceal a certain shyness, but on this particular occasion Joan was being mischievous. "I think Jerry was shocked," she declared. "They all take the programme so seriously, when really it's only a game."

For three weeks Joan was a decorative addition to the *What's My Line?* panel. Her short blonde hair flawlessly brilliantined, long earrings dangling, she displayed an attractive appearance—and little else. "I didn't have much to offer," Joan says, "and I can't think without going 'er . . . er. . . .'"

Miss Greenwood was by no means a dead loss on the television team—her green eyes spotted a woman cobbler's brawny arms and, blindfolded, she identified test pilot Neville Duke—but, at the end of her contract, Joan was happy to return to her profession as an actress.

This calling has given her the opportunity to appear in twenty films and more than forty plays. Her talents at one time earned her a seven-year contract with a reputed value of £70,000. Now an independent artist, she picks and chooses parts for interest rather than financial reward—an attitude that endears her to the B.B.C. Television Service, where the maximum fee is in the neighbourhood of £100 for one performance in a play that involves three weeks' rehearsal.

"I do television for fun," Joan says, "and not as a business." Though she found it fun to make a rousing success as Nora in the TV production of *The Doll's House*, she refused to repeat her performance. "But," she informed the B.B.C., "I would be happy to appear in something else."

Slept Under The Piano

Something else was *The Boxer And The Ballerina*, a TV comedy that allowed her to prance about as a dancer. She originally intended to be a ballerina, changed her mind at school and for most of her thirty-two years has been building a reputation as a dedicated actress. In the process, Joan has also developed an unconventional personality known affectionately as "Crackers" Greenwood. Margaret Lockwood bestowed the "Crackers" nickname the day she discovered Joan's five-foot-two figure curled up underneath a grand piano in the middle of a film set. Joan had been looking for a quiet place to nap.

Among Joan's friends, it is also considered normal that she could catch mumps from a doctor (she had summoned him to cure a cold); run away to join a circus incognito and not tell the publicity department; or develop a language that is incomprehensible to anyone but Peter Ustinov, the actor-playwright. "Soggers," indicating a mood of depression, and "aggers" or "mizzers," denoting discomfort, are fragments of the Greenwood-Ustinov dialect that Joan still uses. Her conversation is also distinguished by charming but incomprehensible phrases that baffle the listener.

"The first time I talked to Joan," says Robert Hamer, the film director, "was about her part in *Kind Hearts And Coronets*. I asked if she had any ideas on how it should be played. 'Oh, yes,' said Joan, 'I think I should be a sort of *chat noir* with a pink ribbon.'"

Hamer retired from the telephone wondering just what sort of a leading lady had been wished on him. His curiosity mounted when Joan appeared on the film set and proved to be the darling of the technicians.

Her Lucky Chinese Symbol

"It was surprising at first," Hamer recalls. "If I called for a piece of furniture to be moved, Joan would be the first to pick it up. It's not very often that you find your star helping the sceneshifters."

Henry Sherek, who is presenting her in her new play, *The Uninvited Guest*, says: "Joan is the most polite and considerate person you could meet. Although billed above Cathleen Nesbitt in this play, she insists that first call and the best dressing-room should go to the distinguished, sixty-three year old Miss Nesbitt."

When appearing in a play, Joan spends considerable time in the theatre. On matinée days she usually arrives about twelve thirty, and will not leave again until some time after the final curtain. The first thing she does on moving into a dressing-room is to paint what looks like an ancient Chinese symbol on the mirror. This strange device is something she once discovered on an ink bottle. Under pressure, she explains that it can be translated as "Pull up your socks, Greenwood."

Shortly before curtain time, nervous tension increases, and Joan either pirouettes about backstage, or sometimes finds relaxation in literally jumping over tables. According to Alexander Mackendrick, who directed her in *Whisky Galore!*, which was filmed in the Hebrides, Joan relaxes best while dancing the eightsome reel. She learned this dance on the Island of Barra, and in the islanders' opinion Joan was the only member of the film cast who could dance.

On location in the Hebrides for *Whisky Galore!*

In *The Uninvited Guest*, she is cast as a secretary; the opening scene presents the actress as a heavily bespectacled typist hard at work. Only when she speaks does the sonorous Greenwood voice betray her identity.

The French, as might be expected, have a phrase for Joan's mellifluous voice. In France, she is the girl with the whisky voice—because of her success in *Whisky Galore!* Neither her voice nor her proportions (a slender seven stone) is a topic that endears itself to Joan.

Lack of height also troubled Joan in her younger days, until Dame Edith Evans told her to stop worrying. "When I was your age," said Dame Edith, from her not inconsiderable height, "producers told me I was too tall. Now, it seems, I am just the right size. You'll find the same thing will happen to you."

Dame Edith was right. When one film director wanted Joan to play opposite six-foot Stewart Granger, the difference in height between them was not allowed to interfere. "Think nothing of it," the director advised his tiny star. "The camera never lies—but it can conceal things." He made Joan stand on a stack of telephone directories for the close-ups. Playing love scenes while perched on such a precarious pedestal has its drawbacks, and helps to explain why one of her favourite leading men is John Mills. "Dear John," says Joan. "When I played opposite him in one film, the director actually asked me to take off my shoes."

On the stage, Joan wears shoes while appearing with Mills. She appears as a girl of twenty-three, which is no problem at all to her, for she

Joan Greenwood as her friends and audiences know her. She relaxed by learning the eightsome reel

Joan, the clown. She somersaulted at the circus

has been playing young parts ever since someone misguidedly dubbed her "the English Shirley Temple." Early in her career, little Miss Greenwood seemed to be typed as the girl who never grew up. One of her first plays was *Little Ladyship*, and it was followed by the part of Little Mary in *The Women*, a rôle that led to a film début as Half-Pint in *The Gentle Sex*.

At the age of twenty Joan was induced to appear in *Peter Pan* as Wendy. "I wasn't happy when they asked me to be Wendy," she recalls, "because I wanted desperately to be Peter."

Playwrights Are Fascinated

Wendy she was, and in the public mind Joan Greenwood became synonymous with sweetness and light. Even after she passed the age of twenty-one and was in firm possession of a door-key, the parts that came Joan's way were demure and childlike. But not long after, she persuaded producers that she was made of sterner stuff. Since then, Joan has appeared as a murderess, a fallen woman and a burglar.

Joan exerts a strange fascination over playwrights and scriptwriters. Alexander Mackendrick was so overwhelmed by the Greenwood charm that he once went into seclusion and wrote a film script specially for her. Various reasons have prevented this from going into production; one is the fact that it is a circus story, and film makers usually consider circus films to be unlucky. It was Joan's preoccupation with circus life that led Mackendrick to write the story.

Circuses have an unusual attraction for Joan, who struggles with a suppressed desire to become a bareback rider. On one occasion she disappeared from home, and was discovered a week later in a small travelling circus at Tunbridge Wells. She had achieved complete anonymity at Tunbridge Wells as a member of a tumbling act. The circus was a family affair, dominated by sixty-year-old Madame Paulo, who, despite her age, was still in charge of breaking horses. Everyone, including Joan, worked all day caring for the animals and rehearsing for the shows. "It's the cradle of show business," Joan declares. "The circus is just the theatre without any inhibitions or pretensions. And they work so hard."

Joan worked with the Paulos for a week, sharing their meals and sleeping under canvas. Some time later, this escapade came to the attention of the film publicity men. They immediately bundled Joan off to Harringay to do a well-publicised matinée as a clown. Her delicate nose was covered by a strawberry-red false one, the shining blonde head was topped with a wig, and she entered the ring clad in knee-length coat over baggy trousers. She somersaulted at the crack of the ringmaster's whip, conducted the musicians behind the band-leader's back and ended up by falling flat on her face in the sawdust.

Guinness Leaped For His Life

Joan's acrobatic ability contrasts with a lack of any mechanical bent. She has no car and, the only time she ever drove one, she almost ran over Alec Guinness. The occasion was a sequence in *The Man In The White Suit*. According to Joan, the critics completely overlooked this scene, which she feels was a triumph of skill and acting. "I was terrified," she says, "and Alec had to jump for his life."

The most successful of Joan's encounters with mechanical objects came when at last she was allowed to play the title rôle in *Peter Pan*, and had to fly through the air. Twice a day, for five months, Joan pleaded with juvenile audiences to answer yes to her husky inquiry: "Do you believe in fairies?"

Joan worked so hard at being Peter Pan that tears rolled down her cheeks when Tinker Bell almost expired. "After five months," she recalls, "I almost got to hate Tinker Bell."

Trouble With The Censor

Rehearsals for *Peter Pan* began as Joan was completing *The Importance Of Being Earnest*. By design rather than coincidence, Joan's mother in the film was played by Edith Evans, who, years before, had prophesied that Joan would have no trouble in getting good parts. According to Anthony Asquith, the director, there is more than a casual resemblance between the two actresses; he stressed this by decking out Joan in large hats and striking dresses that were replicas of those worn by Dame Edith.

Outsize hats with flower and feather decorations lend height to her five feet two inches, and once she had to adopt a hat not only to make herself look taller, but also to satisfy the censor. This was for a scene in *Kind Hearts And Coronets*, where Joan, as the unscrupulous Sybilla, called on Dennis Price. At the end of the sequence the pair were making love on a couch. Joan, of course, was hatless.

"This won't do at all," complained the American censors. "The scene must be cut."

The scene was refilmed with only one change —Joan appeared in a fantastic hat and kept it on throughout the love-making. The censor was satisfied, and made no cuts. "I never knew," says Joan, "how respectable a hat could make a girl."

Offstage, the unconventional Miss Greenwood rarely wears one. THE END

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LINDSAY HASSETT, MY IRREPRESSIBLE SKIPPER

Continued from page 17

Lord's in 1948. The game coincided with the Wimbledon championships, and a TV set was installed in the Australian dressing-room. While waiting his turn to bat, Lindsay sat watching the tennis on the screen.

When the time came for Lindsay's innings, his eyes were not accustomed to the sunshine outside, and he blinked his way to the wicket. The first ball he received from N. W. D. Yardley, the England captain, flattened his leg stump, and Lindsay returned to the pavilion with a grin. As soon as he had unstrapped his pads he resumed his place in front of the TV set. "I am the only international cricketer to have watched the start of a set at Wimbledon, played an innings, and seen the end of the set," he claims.

Baiting "The Tiger"

Nothing delights him more than a verbal exchange with the opposing bowlers. I remember one match I was in between Victoria and New South Wales. Hassett was heading for a second century after beating the daylight out of Bill O'Reilly, the famous leg break and googly bowler.

There was a roar of anguish from O'Reilly when Hassett had the temerity to clout him for a tremendous six. O'Reilly, tall and well-built, and nicknamed "The Tiger," scowled down at him. Lindsay returned an impish grin and called down the pitch, "I thought you could bowl, Tiger."

Hassett delighted in baiting The Tiger—too dangerous a pastime for most cricketers. He continued his tricks off the field. One evening, my wife and I had dinner with the Hassetts. O'Reilly was also invited.

During the conversation after dinner, Hassett remarked that the seasons were caused by the rotation of the earth on its axis. O'Reilly had been a schoolmaster, and told Hassett that he was wrong. "It's the revolution around the sun," he said.

Immediately there was a full-blooded argument. Finally, Lindsay produced a globe and, stretching himself full-length on the floor, proceeded to float it around. Without batting an eyelid, he reversed his previous argument and explained just why it must be *revolution* around the sun. "Tiger" fell for the trick and, without realizing it, argued vehemently for rotation.

For two hours the argument went on, with Hassett mischievously changing at will from rotation to revolution—and the stubborn O'Reilly unwittingly switching back the other way.

Time-honoured Hokum

Lindsay Hassett is always ready to laugh at himself, however. One morning, during the fifth Test between England and Australia at Melbourne in 1951, Lindsay solemnly walked out to the wet pitch and went through the time-honoured ceremony of pressing his thumb on the damp turf. The groundsman, standing by, asked: "What's the chance of an early start?"

"I'm sorry, I haven't an idea," replied the irrepressible Lindsay. "I only do this to look intelligent."

When Lindsay reads about wet pitches in England his mind goes back to 1948, when he was vice-captain to Bradman. It so happened that Bradman did not play in the two matches against county opponents in which the Australians had an uphill fight on a wet pitch. In his place, Hassett led the team.

The second fixture coincided with the English Test trial at Birmingham, and most of the Australian journalists accompanying the tourists went to watch the Englishmen. One was Arthur Mailey, the great googly bowler, whose sense of humour matches Hassett's. Midway through the match, a telegram from Mailey reached Hassett: WHY DO YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO HOLD THE BABY WHEN IT'S WET?

Lindsay Hassett was born on August 28, 1913, at Geelong, a provincial city about fifty miles from Melbourne. He started playing with his college team at fourteen, being matched with boys up to nineteen years of age. In five seasons, each of five games, he created an unbeaten Australian public schools record by scoring 2,257 runs.

While still at school he startled the cricket world with a brilliant century for a country eleven against the 1931 West Indies touring side. With this performance behind him, Lindsay joined the South Melbourne Cricket Club. But he made a sad start in club cricket: he began with seven ducks in seven innings. In the eighth he was caught behind the wicket before he had scored, but the umpire erred and he was given not out. He gave three more chances before his adventurous innings ended when he was bowled for seven.

Melbourne club matches are played over two Saturday afternoons. Thus, young Hassett had only one "hand" (as we Australians call an innings) a fortnight. As he travelled from Geelong to Melbourne each week he covered two hundred miles per innings; 1,400 miles before scoring a run; 1,600 miles for a total of seven runs.

After this unhappy experience, he was demoted to the Colts. In his first game he started none too well and scratched around for fifty runs. Then, with confidence restored, he went on to make a century.

Second Only To Bradman

From then on it was a success story. He has now hit more than 15,000 runs in first-class cricket, including fifty-two centuries, and as a scorer of centuries among Australians is second only to Bradman, who has made 117. Hassett has scored more than a hundred runs in about one innings out of five. Last January, when he led the batting against South Africa, critics complained that he was getting too old. In reply, he scored 163.

In recent years the main complaint about him is that he had locked away his strokes and has gone in more for a plodding, painstaking style.

When Bradman and Barnes went, a sheet anchor had to be found in the Australian batting, and Hassett nominated himself for the task. He may not be as spectacular as he used to be, but in his new rôle he serves Australia well. To subdue, in the interests of the side, his natural inclination to "hit the cover off the ball" with risky shots, as Lindsay has done, shows not only a high degree of responsibility but supreme batting skill.

But he made the most of one opportunity he had in India. He was as fed up as anyone could be when India's captain, Vijay Merchant, left the Australians only twenty minutes to score the 113 runs needed to win. But he called the team together in the dressing-room. "We owe it to the crowd to give them some fun," he said.

So he and Keith Miller went out and slammed at every ball. By the end, though the Indians kept the draw, they had nine men on the boundary and their own countrymen were booing. Says Hassett: "*That* was fun." THE END

"Do you think it would help if we let him smoke?"

FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

Continued from page 9

the future—certainly not for such a bagatelle as having a baby.

Most girls in the Wahgi Valley now know that they can no longer be cruelly punished by their fathers should they run away from a man whom they have been compelled to marry, and such compulsory marriages are becoming fewer and fewer. Thus, these meetings in the Youth House are tending to become important as a means of choosing partners.

Perhaps I may mention here that intimacy between a married man and his wife does not take place in the hut. The men visit their women when they are out working on the plantation.

The Jungle Orators

The following morning I was awakened by a shrill noise coming through the thin wickerwork of the wall—a voice gabbling at tremendous speed in an unbroken semi-shout a rigmarole that I naturally did not understand.

When I walked out on to the veranda to see what was happening, Blood was already there smoking his morning cigarette; he smiled and, pointing at the grassy space in front of us, said: "Members of Parliament."

There in a semicircle sat a dozen or so of the chiefs clad in all the attributes of their dignity, listening devoutly to a colleague who, upright on his feet and gesticulating wildly, was delivering a marathon speech at a furious speed.

It was not till nearly afternoon, when each member of the senate had been able to work off his feelings in oratory, that agreement was reached over the utterly paltry matter they had met to discuss—the ownership of some runaway hens. Conferences of this kind often go on for days.

Later that afternoon it was Blood's turn to meet the assembled potentates, partly to receive their reports, and partly to give them such information about the expedition as it would be advantageous to have disseminated by jungle telegraph ahead of us, as goodwill propaganda. So far we had managed with interpreters from among our cooks, but soon we should be forced to hire them from village to village.

While Blood was having this conference, the day's food column arrived. Its women—men never carry anything but their arms and what they may have killed out hunting—were different from those who had come the day before.

The women carried their heavy burdens on their backs in a kind of net bag which was fastened round their foreheads. At the bottom of it were the sweet potatoes, on top of them the fruit and vegetables, and on top of these, as often as not, a baby—which, if practical, was perhaps not very hygienic. Some of the women also had older infants sitting astride their shoulders and holding on to the mothers' hair.

Use Feet For Hands

The way they work, like beasts of burden, is no doubt the reason why all the women walk with bent knees and toes turned inwards. Both men and women have very large feet, equipped with serviceable prehensile toes, and skin on the soles so thick and light in colour that it reminds one of crêpe rubber soles.

Natives are seldom seen to bend down to pick a small object off the ground. He, or she, will seize the object—a dropped cigarette, piece of stick, or whatever it is—between the big and index toe, then raise the foot until it meets the hand.

The new arrivals settled themselves on their haunches in a row, and each piled in front of her the contents of her net bag. After that, the children received their midday meal of mother's milk, even the four-year-olds being suckled.

The women all stared inquisitively at us, and it was obvious that we were the subject of their whispered talk. Not that we were a complete novelty, for they had already on two or three occasions seen the district officer and his medical assistant. Soon, however, they were to experience one of the greatest sensations of their lives.

Olga Blood and her little daughter Susanne had been having a siesta in the guest-house, and they now came out on to the grassy space in full view of the women. After a second of speechless amazement, there was a great shout of surprise and delight, and all the women began waving their hands. Susanne, with her pink complexion and mop of golden curls, was a huge sensation as, nonchalantly but fully conscious of her importance, she walked down the line waving back.

The native children were terrified and bellowed, seeking immediate cover behind their mothers' backs, but Susanne was highly entertained by the part she was playing. Then she had a brilliant idea; she rushed back into the house and returned almost at once holding something hidden behind her back.

When she reached the squatting women she suddenly thrust forward a lifelike little naked rubber doll. Now even the mothers had a violent fright. Some even moved several yards away, and it was a long time before any dared to touch the doll. When they discovered that its arms and legs could move, and that, if they squeezed its stomach, it came back to position, they all fell silent and gazed in amazement at the mystical fetish.

Then Pondo arrived, followed by two of the cooks, one carrying a pail of salt and the other a tin of small shells. With a soup spoon in one hand, and very conscious of his importance, Pondo passed from woman to woman, with expert eyes assessing each heap of food.

All expectantly stretched out their hands, in each of which they held a large convex leaf. Every woman received in one hand some salt, in the other a few small shells. How Pondo was able to gauge the relative value of the heaps, which were all of different sizes, remained his secret. It always looked to me as though all the women received much the same payment.

Each woman immediately folded her leaf containers and tied them with plant-fibres. I never saw any of them comparing the amount of salt or the number of shells they had been given. Salt was the currency most sought after, and the farther we penetrated into the wilds the greater became the natives' appetite for it.

The whole afternoon a couple of black-haired pigs, still lashed to their carrying-poles, which had been placed on forked sticks set upright in the ground, had been hanging upside down in the blazing sun. When they had been borne into the village, almost certainly after having spent several hours already dangling under the poles, they had still been able to grunt protests against their treatment. But now they hung there apathetically with closed eyes, obviously too far gone even to shake off their new tormentors, the flies.

A Sign Of Lunacy?

I had already hinted to Pondo that he ought to buy them at once, so that we could put them out of their misery. I had not put my reason into words, for I knew that it was quite impossible for him to regard such a reason as anything but a sign of incipient lunacy.

To be honest, I must admit that there was a certain amount of moral cowardice involved as well, for I still remembered the half wondering, half pitying look Pondo had given me during the previous day's march, when I had asked whether there was not a more humane method of transporting our hens. These poor creatures were hanging head down, several by one leg only, on the same carrying-pole from which our tin pails hung jangling.

While Pondo was buying vegetables, the owners of the pigs reappeared and soon bargaining was in full swing. As we could see and hear, Pondo was not meeting the grateful acquiescence he had from the women.

When, in the end, he somewhat reluctantly handed over the purchase price of a large shell and a few spoonfuls of salt for each pig, he accompanied it with a class-conscious "damned bush kanakas." That is the term for their less enlightened fellows in the wilds used by all police-boys, who are ridiculously puffed up with their learning and imagined superiority.

Meat or poultry from the larder has of necessity to be transported alive in these parts, where killing must be followed almost at once by cooking and eating. The heat, damp and insects usually make it impossible to keep anything even for a few hours.

Pig Tail Ornaments

I shall not describe in detail the slaughtering, or rather clubbing, of the pigs; it was just a popular entertainment of a particularly brutal kind. For some reason or other that I endeavoured in vain to discover, the tails were cut off before the poor brutes were clubbed to death by the jubilant natives, and then used as adornments. The carcasses were then cut up with knives made of bamboo, and each group, consisting of about twenty men, received its share.

Both meat and vegetables are prepared in the following manner. Stones are heated in a great fire, and when it has burned down to a glow, the embers and stones are thrown into a trench about two feet deep. On the red-hot stones a thick layer of leaves is thrown, and on top of the leaves the food is laid.

This is then covered with another layer of leaves, and the whole covered with the loose earth. The steam forces its way through several small ducts. Everything is thus steam-cooked. Often both meat and vegetables are thrown into the same trench.

As no spices are ever used, the dishes are most insipid. Our porters did

LIFE WITH FATHER

THE DAY my father received his papal knighthood, a dinner was given for him by fifty of his oldest friends. After the meal he was to be presented with his brief of the Order of St. Gregory by Cardinal Griffin. It was a great occasion, planned and talked about for weeks. But an hour before the guests were due to arrive the new knight had not come home to dress. I guessed what had happened and, taking a taxi, went the round of his haunts. I found him all right. He had completely forgotten about his dinner date.

I suppose we have suffered from my father's forgetfulness all our lives. There was the memorable occasion when the Water Board had turned off the mains, Father returned late and, wanting a drink, went round the whole house and turned on every tap trying to get a drink. In the small hours the Water Board resumed the supply. I awoke at dawn to a Niagara, and could have gone over the stairs in a barrel.

Cardinal Griffin called him "The Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance," for he has rarely been known to smile; I've seen him put across his funniest utterances with a look of perpetual mourning, like a hound lost in the snow.

As I grew up, I was often puzzled about the sort of man I had chosen for a father. He took no interest in anything that interested me: he was unmechanical to the point of not being able to use a typewriter or drive a car. Yet he never failed to return home with some new trick or gadget in his pocket; they never worked, either.

All he seemed to do was wear plus-fours and sit by the fire with a book, impatient of being disturbed except by meals—he had a fantastic appetite. Writing was work, and he hated work, so he wrote only when driven.

Until the later years, he never specialized as a comic writer. During my childhood he turned his hand to almost anything—women's love stories, home notes, advice to lovers in distress, gardening, hairdressing, medicine, religion. His commentaries to Chaplin's silent films are still being heard. He wrote songs, advertising copy, serious scientific articles, book reviews—all with a sort of nervous impulsiveness that, curiously, has the effect of taking him above pain or discomfort or mental distress.

On the Sunday that Tommy Handley died, the news came through when Father was writing the next radio script. He was shocked, almost to the point of speechlessness. Soon after, reporters started arriving. Obviously he could not see them, as the B.B.C. wanted an obituary for the nine o'clock news. I put him to work writing Tommy's obituary. It was ready for the nine o'clock news. He then relaxed and entertained the reporters himself until the early hours of Monday.

Father married my mother when he was a medical student in Glasgow. He lost faith in medicine, but always doctored us.

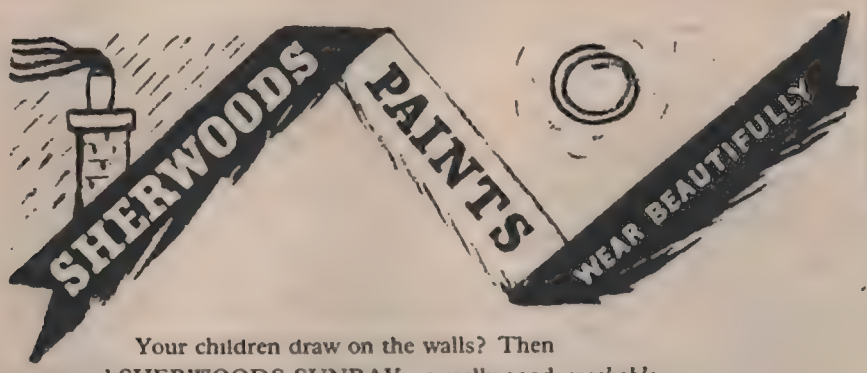
We did not really get to know one another until a trip we made to Denmark and Sweden. The difficulty was, of course, keeping an eye on Father, as I soon discovered his facility for getting lost. In Copenhagen he forgot the name of our hotel, and we had to telephone all the big ones in turn.

One night he even mistook his room number. He did not notice that a woman's clothing was strewn about; he stood, gazing out of the window, until his reverie was shattered by a shriek as the rightful occupant emerged from the bathroom.

My father fled. To avoid meeting her next morning he dragged me to a restaurant round the corner. As we sat down I saw his face turn scarlet. "She's here!" he whispered from behind a menu.

I looked round, just in time to see the woman suddenly recognize him and get behind a menu herself.

Who is the famous father? For his name—and the complete picture—turn to page 35



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however occasionally get a little salt from our stores, and they would take a little pinch out of their leaf container to help things along when meat was served.

After this dinner, each group lay down round its fire and audibly revelled in its physical well-being. After the siesta, there was a period of lively conversation, during which most indulged in a fresh form of pleasure—scratching themselves energetically with a sort of fork-like bamboo comb on the head, where the inhabitants of their large curly topknots had obviously begun their main meal of the day.

After a while, there would usually be flashes of lightning and rumbles of thunder to herald the customary downpour, and all would creep into their little huts and sleep round the night fires.

The natives never slept either deeply or long, and so the fires were always tended throughout the night, and there was no need to appoint people to watch them. Up on the mountains a fire was necessary because of the cold at night—we had several blankets on our camp beds. In the valleys, where the heat was damp and aggressive, the smoke was some protection against the mosquitoes.

Blood had made a large tent of mosquito-netting in which we were able to sit and work in the evenings without being disturbed by mosquitoes. Our camp beds were also provided with nets, but there were innumerable insects which tried to worm under it, and then creep up the legs of the beds.

These were dealt with by resting the legs of the beds in old tins filled with water. But however swift I thought I had been in getting under my net and into bed, some insects always managed to sneak in with me, and before trying to get to sleep I first had to hunt for them by the light of an electric torch.

Polished Their Spears

The day dawned on which we were to leave the Wahgi Valley, cross the Elkanump Pass, nine thousand feet up, and make our way into what was still a blank space on the map of the world. Long before dawn the porters were busily and noisily engaged giving a last polish to the spears they had made the previous day. Even to these men of the Wahgi Valley, the far side of Mount Elkanump was the beginning of the great unknown, and for all their heavy burdens they, too, wished to carry arms.

After a light breakfast and hasty morning toilet—the last we would have for a long time in the relative comfort of a guest-house—we moved off at six o'clock. We made so early a start because Blood wanted to get over the climb up the mountain before the worst of the midday heat.

Above the low drifting clouds we could see the crest of Elkanump, 11,700 feet, and to the left of it the more conical peak of Mount Jaka, almost as high. Behind us to the south stretched the valley, at this point some ten miles broad, and beyond it was the dark-green background of the mountains of the Kubor Range, almost 13,000 feet high.

Our way led first through an area of scrub and swamp, where the trunks of felled giant trees had been laid across the most marshy places, and which was evidently the favourite resort of some herds of half-wild pigs belonging to the village of Kimil.

As well as the pigs belonging to individual families, each village community in those parts keeps a communal herd. Ownership is established by marks cut in the ear. These half-tame village pigs are the descendants of the wild piglets which the women rear. They constitute the village's combined welfare and hospitality fund, and pigs live a life of liberty which only man can disturb, for there are no large beasts of prey anywhere in this mighty island. The only exception is a weak race of wild, fox-like dogs that are found in some parts of the southern districts.

Met Kon-Tiki Leader

On my return to Stockholm I received a visit from Thor Heyerdahl, famous leader of the Kon-Tiki expedition, who was greatly interested in the peculiar appearance and culture of the inhabitants of the Wahgi Valley. He was especially intrigued by the fact that there, as in some of the South Sea islands he studied, children are born in certain families with lighter skins and fair, sometimes reddish hair.

Similarly interesting were the fox-like reddish-coloured dogs which must have been the descendants of domestic ones run wild. At the time of Captain Cook's visit, the South Sea islanders had no domestic swine—pigs were introduced by the whites—but they kept herds of small yellow or reddish-coloured dogs, which they fattened on fish and sweet potatoes for eating.

Can the hook-nosed inhabitants of the Wahgi Valley possibly be a remnant of Polynesians who, after landing on New Guinea, made their way up from the coast towards their age-old habitat, the hills, taking such dogs with them?

Colour In The Jungle

When I found myself having to balance along the extremely slippery trunks of the trees laid across the swampy patches, I felt very pleased with myself for having put on my golf shoes with spikes in the soles. Within a few hours, however, I was bitterly to regret having done so.

After about two hours of what we were eventually to consider easy going, we entered the first bit of proper jungle with giant trees and an impenetrable confusion of lianas and tree ferns. Garish orchids of every size and colour glowed through the leaves. Colourful parrots were continually

Coronation Showman

AN INTIMATE PROFILE OF DAVID ECCLES

STAGE manager for the Coronation is David Eccles, Minister of Works, connoisseur of painting, pottery and old books, self-made financier who was rich before he was thirty, whose overbearing brush-off is now famous at Westminster.

Wilfred Greatorex has written a frank profile of the Minister who does not mind treading on other people's toes or "tearing up tradition by the roots." Behind it is the story of the mighty effort to prepare for the Coronation pageantry—a kaleidoscope of architects' plans, of contractors driven ahead of schedules, of artists and sculptors working to orders, all dominated by a single man. It will appear . . .

Royal showman Eccles with his wife

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

"I didn't get all that stuff after 'Dear Sir'"

flying over us, loudly protesting at having been disturbed. Occasionally we caught glimpses of lovely white cockatoos and heard the shrill cries of birds of paradise.

I got a good view of a large green-brown lizard as it scurried across the path. My boy, Kaibal, who sometimes wandered off it in search of beetles for me, caught a green and yellow tree snake, taking it in a cleft stick immediately behind the head.

The porters considered the snake an exquisite delicacy and, later that day, when we were having dinner, Kaibal appeared with a piece for me to taste. It had been roasted over a camp fire and tasted exactly like smoked eel; it had, too, the eel's oily white flesh.

The ground now began to rise more and more, and finally it was nothing but steeps, often almost perpendicular, with narrow terraces between, on which we could pause to get our breath, for we were now feeling the effect of the height. On these steeps the narrow path turned into just a series of holes in the brown-red clay soil, which was still sticky from the night's downpour.

Climbed On All Fours

This clay clogged the spikes of my shoes and became a large lump that turned my shoes into skis—with the ski's tendency to run backwards. On every terrace I had to scratch the clay away with a stick. I climbed the worst faces on all fours, with occasional pushes from behind by my faithful Kaibal, who got a wonderful grip in the holes with his strong toes.

I have no doubt he wondered what could have been the object of my unpractical footgear. Seldom can any of the inventions of our civilization have been so exhaustively execrated as those expensive golf shoes I bought in Sydney. At last Kaibal and I—we had, of course, soon become an involuntary rearguard—reached a terrace where the column was resting, and I was able to change my shoes.

I could never understand how Olga Blood had been able to cling on tight enough to keep herself in her litter during that climb; at the steepest parts she had had to lie on her face, clutching the front shafts. In my eyes the porters of the heavier loads had performed superhuman feats, only possible because their feet were suited to such climbing.

We did not reach the highest point of the pass till two o'clock in the afternoon; this was a plateau where the forest had given place to a moss wood dripping with moisture. The ground itself, the trunks of the trees and their branches, were all covered with a layer of moss, and it seemed that neither flowers nor birds could live there.

Because certain parts of the country are surrounded by mountains covered with this moss wood, animal life there is isolated; and so, in the course of thousands of years, distinct varieties have developed, not only among the ground mammals, but even among birds and insects, which do not go beyond a certain height because of the cold and the rarity of the air.

Distance Was Deceptive

From the point where we had halted, we had an extensive view northwards across jungle-clad mountains to the dark contours of the Bismarck and Schräder massifs towering among the clouds on the horizon. In country like this it is quite impossible to attempt to calculate distance by eye.

Standing on top of such a mountain, one may think that the next mountain is quite close. One's gaze sweeps across the intervening and seemingly narrow glen, where all contours and detail are hidden beneath the green carpet of the tree-tops. In two or three hours, says the tiro, we shall be there, but as often as not he will be glad if he can reach it before nightfall after an exhausting day's march.

After lunch there was a short pause for a smoke and then we set off again. The goal of that day's march was the village of Karop. This lies on an offset of the north slope of the Elkanump Pass and was well known to some of our spare porters from Kimil.

Village Behind Palisades

Our way was now down steep slopes, and more than once I covered long stretches in a sitting position. An hour and a half later we encountered the first scouts from Karop. Then, having passed some cultivated clearings and clambered over a couple of palisades of pointed stakes—a ladder was provided—we emerged on to the projecting headland that the palisades delimited, and on which the village was sited in a very favourable defensive position.

The steep slopes, cleared of trees at the top, which surrounded the village almost in a circle, were cluttered with everything that our sanitary authorities hasten to remove. The chief had had a new hut arranged as a sort of guest-house, and everything was prepared for us as well as could be. Thanks to the jungle radio, messengers from the next village were already there with greetings from their chief, another very important *luluai*, and the assurance that we were welcome and that he himself would meet us the following day.

NEXT WEEK: Alfred Vogel meets the pygmy warriors of the Jimmi River

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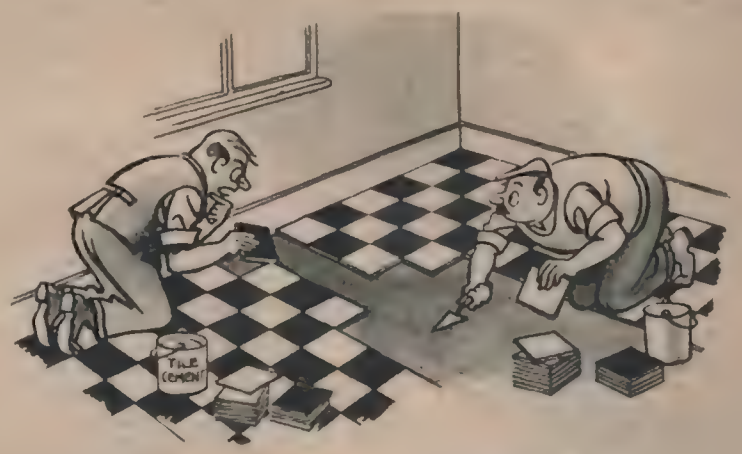

"I've a feeling it's not going to come out right this time, either"

MONSOON PEARL

Continued from page 20

with a dangerous drawl. "Come on, Batliwallah. Hand it over."

"But you may take the key if you wish. See, it is quite safe."

"Sure, sure. Come on, Batliwallah. Quick!"

The Indian looked scared. "But how may I be sure I will ever see you again? I am not even knowing if it is your real name on the contract. I must protect myself."

Candleblow took a pace forward. The Indian opened the drawer, fumbled for the bag.

"Very well. Very well," he agreed quickly. "But please, I must ask you to do one thing." He brought out a safety-pin and stuck it through the neck of the bag. "Pin it to the inside of your pocket. Please!"

Candleblow grunted, took the bag, scowled at Batliwallah and stuffed it into his pocket. "Tomorrow," he said.

As we went out into the night and the rain, the Indian came to the door and watched us go. He stood in the shadow with only his hands catching the light of the street lamp, and when I looked back I saw just two hands, folded, in the darkness of the doorway.

As soon as we were round the corner, Candleblow took out the bag and pinned it to the inside of his shirt.

"Can't trust 'em a foot," he said. "If I'd 'a let him keep it, he'd have turned up tomorrow with a substitute, ringed as a coon, most likely. From now on we got to expect trouble, cobber. Ten to one Batliwallah's on the telephone this minute trying to find out who we are. He'll find out; and inside a couple of hours all the pearl boys in Colombo will know what's cooking, and that could include Olaf. We might even get a visit."

"Better come to my place," I said. "There's just a chance they won't link me up with this."

We got a taxi to the Galle Face and walked the rest of the way, with the sea wind blowing the rain, down a narrow track with bungalows among the palms. The track became sand, and there was my shack silhouetted against the white breakers.

We skirted round it but couldn't see anyone, so we went inside, closing the shutters before we lighted the lamps. We got into some dry clothes and rustled a meal on the oilstove. It was late by then, so we tossed up for the camp-bed. Candleblow won. I rolled up in some blankets on the floor.

Candleblow was pretty excited still, and it made him chatty. He talked about Batliwallah and about Olaf and about what he was going to do in Australia. I lay there listening to the soft rasp of his voice. The sea and the rain made wild, sad sounds outside. Something was troubling me. I lay there trying to think what it was. Something that had happened. Somehow we had slipped up. I went back through the events of the day carefully, but the trouble eluded me. The more I thought about it, however, the more I was certain that something was wrong.

Candleblow's monologue tailed off eventually. Presently I heard him snore. I lay awake a long time with suspicion nagging at me. I worked on it for about an hour; then suddenly I knew what would have to be done. It was risky, but it was the only way.

I got up silently, slipped into my swimming trunks, collected my knife and fins, and let myself out the back. The rain was like an electric shock on my skin. The sea was pounding furiously along the beach, and for a moment I felt like turning back—but only for a moment; then I remembered a certain afternoon in Mannar, and I started off along the sand.

I ran till I was as close to the town as I could get on the beach; then I stopped and put on my fins. The sea looked angry and cold. Getting out through the surf would be the tough part; after that, nothing but sharks could stop me.

I stepped into the water, taking the waves sideways. They were warm after the rain. I waited until there was a lull, then struck out into the darkness.

I got back just as dawn was breaking. I was tired and cold. When I entered the shack, Candleblow was standing in his shirt making coffee. "Where in hell you been, Mike?" he asked, looking me over.

"For a swim," I said.

"In a bucket of tar, looks like," he said, and his eyes were full of suspicion.

"The beach is filthy," I said. "Sleep well?"

"Uh-huh."

On that note we ate breakfast. Candleblow was unusually silent; I considered telling him the truth, but my fears of last night seemed suddenly ridiculous by daylight. Only a big fool would have done on spec what I had just done.

We took a bus into Colombo. The markets were full of early shoppers dodging the rain from awning to awning. We moved warily through the crowds, Candleblow pinching the pearl tightly under his shirt in case he should brush against a pickpocket.

Ganga's was already open. We paused on the steps outside and took a look around the street. We saw nothing particularly suspicious.

"Well, this is it!" Candleblow said. He pushed open the swinging door.

It was a typical Colombo jewellery shop. The walls were lined with showcases; big fans hung in rows motionless overhead. At the back stood several screens.

A half-caste, with skin the colour of parchment, came whispering across the marble towards us. "Good morning?"

"We've come to see Ganga."

"You are Mr. Smith? Oh, yes. Come, please."

Candleblow raised an eyebrow at me. We followed the old man behind the

screens to a door at the back. He knocked and went in, closing the door in our faces. A moment later it opened again, and we were looking into an office. A tall, well-nourished Sinhalese was standing behind the desk.

Candleblow advanced warily. Batliwallah was in there; three other men sat in easy chairs. Ganga came around the desk to us, smiling with rubbery, polished-looking lips. He was younger than I had expected, about thirty-eight, with a black moustache and cheeks that looked as though he were sucking a couple of boiled sweets.

"Mr. Smith, I believe? And—ah—Mr. Gardener?"

English public school, I thought. And he knew our names. Suddenly I knew that we were going to have to be awfully smart.

"This is Mr. Sin, Mr. Rashid Beg and Mr. Krishna." There was a nodding of heads. "They are in the trade. I have invited them here to have a look at this pearl Batliwallah speaks of so highly. They may bid for it if they wish. That is," he added, with a sidelong glance at Candleblow, "if you have no objection. Cigarette?"

He lifted an ivory box by the lid. Candleblow took one. What the devil, I thought; why is Ganga passing up the chance of a private deal?

"Smoke, Mr. Gardener?"

"No, thanks."

Ganga's eyes looked into mine for an instant. "Well," he said. "To work." Retiring behind his desk, he cleared a space on his blotter and looked up expectantly.

Slowly, almost reluctantly, Candleblow unpinned the chamois bag from

CUP FINAL WIFE

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IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

inside his shirt and turned it upside down on the pad.

There was complete silence. The pearl before us was a piece of baroque, as blind as an upturned eye.

Candleblow gasped. The dealers, who had leaned perceptibly forward, sank back, looking at one another.

I knew instantly, then, what it was that had slipped my memory last night. When he had fumbled in the drawer of his desk, Batliwallah had switched bags.

At that moment Batliwallah stepped forward, a smirk on his thin mouth as he pocketed the baroque and emptied the real pearl from its bag on to the blotting paper. "A slight precaution," he murmured, glancing at Candleblow.

"Why, you dirty——" The Australian took a step forward.

"Please!" Ganga held up his hand. "It was a sensible precaution."

Candleblow made a baffled sound and stood opening and closing his fists.

Completely the master of the situation now, Ganga said: "You know, this is quite perfect, Smith. A really lovely thing. Do you mind?"

He handed it to the dealers. They examined it minutely with the lens he passed them.

"May we weigh it?" Mr. Sin asked.

Ganga pointed to the scales. Batliwallah applied the weights. There was a moment of calculation.

"I, myself, will offer one thousand pounds sterling," Ganga said.

"One thousand fifty," Mr. Sin said.

"Eleven hundred," Krishna said.

I glanced at Candleblow. The sullen

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look on his face was giving way slowly to triumph.

"Eleven hundred fifty," Mr. Sin said.

The bidding was brisk and to the point. Ganga did not bid again. There was something mighty screwy somewhere, I thought, watching closely.

The Indian, Krishna, reached thirteen hundred and stopped. No one raised him. In a fine humour, Ganga shook him by the hand. "She is yours," he said.

Krishna brought out his cheque-book. "To whom shall I make it payable?"

"Richard Ganga," the Sinhalese said, "and Company."

Candleblow jerked upright as if he'd been knifed. "Hey!" he exclaimed. "What's the big idea?"

Ganga looked up at him coldly. "Sit down, Smith, and control yourself. Show Mr. Peterson in, Batliwallah."

Candleblow wheeled around to me. "If you're in this, Gardener, I'll kill you!" he said.

Before I could say anything, the door opened and Olaf came in. He stood in the doorway, his hands in the pockets of a sopping trench coat, looking around—short, dark, a yard wide. He scowled at Candleblow and me.

"Is this your fellow?" Ganga said.

"That's him," Olaf said.

"Had a comparatively easy day. The boss fired me first thing this morning . . ."

GANGA turned to Candleblow. "You see, it just can't be done. You can't double-cross us. But then you're not very bright. Didn't it occur to you that as the biggest pearl buyer in Colombo I might also be Peterson's backer?"

"You?" Candleblow said. He looked round at the gentlemen in the chairs.

"Don't concern yourself about them, Smith," Ganga said. "They are fully in my confidence. I don't know how you obtained the so-called gambling blister that Batliwallah operated on yesterday, but since you obviously came by it during your trip with Peterson, you have unwittingly brought it to its rightful owner. You have saved me the trouble of having you rounded up. I suppose I should be thankful; certainly *you* should—you probably saved your life." He opened a drawer. In it was a short black automatic. He didn't touch it. "We don't want any violence. Just take your hat and go."

Candleblow swayed on the balls of his feet. I thought he was going to make a grab for Ganga's throat.

"Hold it, Candleblow!" I snapped. I approached the desk. "All right, Ganga. If you have a right to the pearl, then the crew have a right to their percentage. Divers get ten, so pay the man his dough! One hundred and thirty pounds!"

Ganga stared at me; then he laughed. "Really. These two are absurd. I'm under no obligation, you understand. But I'll pay you, just to get you out of my office."

He started writing out the cheque.

"Payable, if you please, to Batliwallah," said the Indian.

Even Ganga was surprised.

"Pearl doctor's fees," Batliwallah explained. "I have Mr. Smith's signed contract here."

That did it. Candleblow was dumbfounded, but there was no way round it. Ganga completed the cheque. Then he began to laugh. He laughed with a high-pitched nasal sound. "Oh, go away, you two," he said, laughing and dabbing his eyes with his handkerchief. "Go on, push off. Run along home." He closed his cheque-book.

"Don't put that away," I said quietly.

Ganga looked up. "What's that?"

"I said, don't put that away. You're going to buy something."

"Such as?"

"Some hose, a couple of diving suits, thirty fathoms of lifeline—all neatly packed in a submarine container."

The room was suddenly silent. Ganga sat absolutely motionless. His doll eyes went from me to Olaf. Olaf stood in the doorway—still as a flashlight photograph—with his bald bullet head thrust forward, his hands hooked as though ready to wring my neck. "What about it, Gardener?" he demanded.

"I've got it," I said. "I cut it loose last night and towed it away. It's for sale; anyone can buy it. Anyone who has thirteen hundred pounds, that is. And the cheque, by the way, should be made out 'cash.'"

* * *

Candleblow got the boat. He was very apologetic about having mistrusted me. I stood on the dockside and watched him pull out. The rain had hauled off, and a bright light was showing out along the western sea.

It looked eerie behind the filth of the quay and the four-rupee-a-day coolies and the blistered barges—like gold plate in a kitchen.

Candleblow forced his way to the rail and waved his hat. He was shouting something, but his rusty voice got mixed up with the cries of some seagulls. Sounded like: "I love you!" I grinned. I was glad for him, gladder than I had been for a long time about anything. THE END

AFTER THE FUNERAL

Continued from page 16

drawing-room. The mantelpiece, for instance, and that very odd-shaped couch. They'd be just right for *The Baronet's Progress*—if we revive it."

He got up and looked at his watch. "That reminds me. I must go round and see Rosenheim. Don't expect me until rather late this evening. I'm dining with Oscar."

"Darling Oscar. He'll be pleased to see you after all this time. Give him my love."

Michael looked at her sharply. "What do you mean—after all this time? Anyone would think I hadn't seen him for months."

"Well, you haven't, have you?" murmured Rosamund.

"Yes, I have. We lunched together only a week ago."

"How funny. He must have forgotten about it. He rang up yesterday and said he hadn't seen you since the first night of *Tilly Looks West*."

"The old fool must be off his head."

Michael laughed. Rosamund, her eyes wide and blue, looked at him without emotion.

"You think I'm a fool, don't you, Mick?"

"Darling, of course I don't."

"Yes, you do. But I'm not an absolute nitwit. You didn't go near Oscar that day. I know where you did go. It was rather silly—telling me a lot of lies."

"Look here, Rosamund——"

He had started to bluster, but he stopped, taken aback as his wife said softly: "We do want to put this play on, don't we?"

"Want to? It's the part I've always dreamed must exist somewhere."

"Yes—that's what I mean.. It's worth a good deal, isn't it? But one mustn't take *too* many risks."

He stared at her and said slowly: "It's your money—I know that. If you don't want to risk it——"

"It's *our* money, darling." Rosamund stressed it. "I think that's rather important."

"Listen, darling. The part of Eileen—it would bear writing up."

Rosamund smiled. "I don't think—really—that I want to play it."

"My dear girl." Michael was aghast. "What's come over you?"

"Nothing."

"Yes, there is. You've been different lately—moody, nervous. What is it?"

"Nothing. I only want you to be—careful, Mick. You always think you can get away with things and that everyone will believe whatever you want them to. You were stupid about Oscar that day."

Michael flushed angrily.

"And what about you? You said you were going shopping with Jane. You didn't. Jane's in America; has been for weeks."

"Yes," said Rosamund. "That was stupid, too. I really just went for a walk—in Regent's Park."

Michael looked at her curiously. "Regent's Park? You never went for a walk in Regent's Park in your life. What's it all about? Have you got a boy friend? You may say what you like, Rosamund; you *have* been different lately. Why?"

"I've been—thinking about things. About what to do. . . . Things are different now. We've got to think and plan. Things aren't over when you've done them. It's really a sort of beginning. . . ."

"Rosamund. . . ."

ROSAMUND sat perplexed, her wide gaze on a middle distance in which Michael, apparently, did not feature. At the third repetition of her name, she started slightly and came out of her reverie. "I was wondering if I'd go down to—what is it?—Lytchett St. Mary, and see that Miss Somebody—the one who was with Aunt Cora."

"But why?"

"Well, she'll be going away soon, won't she? To relatives or someone. I don't think we ought to let her go away until we've asked her."

"Asked her what?"

"Asked her who killed Aunt Cora."

Michael stared. "You mean—you think she *knows*?"

Rosamund said rather absently: "Oh, yes, I expect so—she lived there, you see."

"But she'd have told the police."

"Oh, I don't mean she knows *that* way. I just mean that she's probably quite sure. Because of what Uncle Richard said when he went down there."

"But she wouldn't have heard what he said."

"Oh, yes, she would, darling." Rosamund sounded like someone arguing with an unreasonable child. "I expect she'd have heard it through the door."

"Eavesdropping, you mean?"

"I expect so—in fact, I'm sure."

Michael said in a stifled voice: "Rosamund, who do you think killed Cora? And old Richard?"

Once again that limpid blue gaze met his.

"Darling—don't be absurd. . . . You know as well as I do. But it's much, much better *never* to mention it. So we won't."

FROM his seat by the fireplace in the library, Hercule Poirot looked at the assembled company. He had wanted them there, all together, and he had got them. And what, he thought to himself, was he going to do with them now?

Poirot sighed to himself as he sipped his after-dinner coffee. There were to be no short cuts to the truth. He would have to adopt a long, but a reasonably sure method. There would have to be conversation. Much conversation. For, in the long run, either through a lie, or through truth, people were bound to give themselves away. . . .

He had been introduced by Helen to the gathering, and had set to work to overcome the almost universal annoyance caused by his presence—a foreign stranger—in this family gathering. Adroitly, he had engineered *tête-à-tête* walks upon the terrace, and had made his deductions and observations. It had been a surprise to find Miss Gilchrist there, but he had talked with her about the vanished glories of her teashop and about the correct composition of *brioches* and chocolate *éclairs* and had visited the kitchen garden with her to discuss the proper use of herbs in cooking.

He had spent some long half hours listening to Timothy talking about his own health and about the effect upon it of paint.

Paint? Poirot frowned. Somebody else had said something about paint—Mr. Entwhistle?

There had also been discussion of a different kind of painting. Pierre Lansquenet as a painter. Cora Lansquenet's paintings, rapturized over by Miss Gilchrist, dismissed scornfully by Susan. "Just like picture-postcards," she had said. "She did them from postcards, too."

Miss Gilchrist had been quite upset by that and had said sharply that dear Mrs. Lansquenet always painted from Nature.

"She didn't. She cheated," said Susan to Poirot when Miss Gilchrist had gone out of the room.

"And how do you know?" Poirot watched the strong, confident line of Susan's chin. She will always be sure, this one, he thought. And perhaps, sometime, she will be too sure. . . .

Susan was going on. "I'll tell you, but don't pass it on to the Gilchrist. One picture is of Polflexan, the cove and the lighthouse and the pier—the usual aspect that all amateur artists sit down and sketch. But the pier was blown up in the war, and since Aunt Cora's sketch was done a couple of years ago, it can't very well be from Nature, can it? But the postcards they sell there still show the pier as it used to be. There was one in her bedroom drawer. It's funny, isn't it, the way people get caught out?"

"Yes, it is, as you say, funny." He paused, and then thought that the opening was a good one.

"You do not remember me, madame," he said, "but I remember you. This is not the first time that I have seen you."

She stared at him. Poirot nodded with great gusto.

"Yes, yes, it is so. I was inside an automobile, well wrapped up. You were talking to a mechanic in the garage. You do not notice me—it is natural. I am inside the car—an elderly, muffled-up foreigner! But *I* notice *you*, for you are young and agreeable to look at and you stand there in the sun. So when I arrive

here, I say to myself, *'Tiens!* What a coincidence!' "

"A garage? Where? When was this?"

"Oh, a little time ago—a week—no, more. For the moment," said Poirot disingenuously, and with a full recollection of the King's Arms Garage in his mind, "I cannot remember where. I travel so much all over this country."

"Looking for a suitable house to buy for your refugees?"

"Yes. There is so much to take into consideration, you see. Price, neighbourhood, suitability for conversion."

M. Poirot then deftly turned the conversation to the subject of Susan's future plans. She told him about them in detail and with a great deal of unconscious self-revelation.

"How fortunate," he said, "that you are not restricted, as so many are, by poverty. One cannot go far without the capital outlay. To have had these creative ideas and to have been frustrated by lack of means—that would have been unbearable."

"I couldn't have borne it. But I'd have raised money somehow or other—got someone to back me. Opportunity!" Susan said, taking a deep breath. "That's what one needs."

Poirot, who had been looking beyond her, said gaily: "And here is your husband come to join our little discussion. . . . We talk, Mr. Banks, of opportunity. Opportunity the golden—opportunity who must be grasped with both hands. How far in conscience can one go? Let us hear your views."

But he was not destined to hear the views of Gregory Banks on opportunity or on anything else. In fact, he had found it next to impossible to talk to Gregory Banks at all. Banks had a curious fluid quality. Whether by his own wish, or by that of his wife, he seemed to have no liking for *tête-à-tête* or quiet discussions.

No, "conversation" with Gregory had failed.

POIROT had talked with Maude Abernethie—also about paint (the smell of) and how fortunate it had been that Timothy had been able to come to Enderby, and how kind it had been of Helen to extend an invitation to Miss Gilchrist also.

"For really," said Maude, "she is *most* useful. I feel it was really quite providential that she should have lost her nerve about staying alone in the house as she did, though I admit it vexed me at the time."

"Lost her nerve?" Poirot was interested.

He listened while Maude gave him an account of Miss Gilchrist's sudden collapse.

"She was frightened, you say? And yet could not say exactly why? That is interesting. Very interesting. Had anything particular happened that day?" he asked.

"No, I don't think so. It seems to have been coming on ever since she left Lytchett St. Mary, or so she said. She didn't seem to mind when she was there."

And the result, Poirot thought, had been a piece of poisoned wedding cake. Not so very surprising that Miss Gilchrist was frightened after that. . . . And even when she had removed herself to the peaceful country round Stansfield Grange, the fear had lingered. More than lingered. Grown. Why grown? Surely attending on an exacting hypochondriac like Timothy must be so exhausting that nervous fears would be likely to be swallowed up in exasperation?

BUT something in that house had made Miss Gilchrist afraid. What? Did she know herself?

Finding himself alone with Miss Gilchrist for a brief space before dinner, Poirot had sailed into the subject with an exaggerated foreign curiosity.

"Impossible, you comprehend, for me to mention the matter of murder to members of the family. But I am intrigued. Who would not be? A brutal crime — a sensitive artist attacked in a lonely cottage. Terrible for her family. But terrible, also, I imagine for *you*, since Mrs. Timothy Abernethie gives me to understand that you were there at the time?"

"Yes, I was. And, if you'll excuse me, M. Pontarlier, I don't want to talk about it."

"I understand—oh, yes, I completely understand."

Having said this, Poirot waited. And, as he had thought, Miss Gilchrist immediately *did* begin to talk about it.

Not until she had exhausted the subject of what she herself had felt, and what the doctor had said, and how kind Mr. Entwhistle had been, did Poirot proceed cautiously to the next point.

"You were wise, I think, not to remain alone down in that cottage."

"I couldn't have done it, M. Pontarlier. I really couldn't have done it."

"No. I understand even that you were afraid to remain alone in the house of Mr. Timothy Abernethie while they came here?"

Miss Gilchrist looked guilty. "I'm terribly ashamed about that. So foolish, really. It was just a kind of panic I had—I really don't know *why*."

"But of course one knows why. You had just recovered from a dastardly attempt to poison you——"

Miss Gilchrist here sighed and said she simply couldn't understand it. Why should anyone try to poison her?

"But obviously, my dear lady, because this criminal, this assassin, thought that you knew something that might lead to his apprehension by the police."

"But what could *I* know? Some dreadful tramp, or semi-crazed creature."

"If it *was* a tramp. It seems to me unlikely——"

"Oh please, M. Pontarlier—" Miss Gilchrist became suddenly upset. "Don't suggest such things. I don't want to believe it."

"You don't want to believe what?"

"I don't want to believe that it wasn't—I mean—that it was—" she paused, confused.

"And yet," said Poirot shrewdly, "you *do* believe."

"Oh, I don't. I *don't*."

"But I think you do. That is why you are frightened. You are still frightened, are you not?"

"Oh no, not since I came here. So many people. And such a nice family atmosphere. Oh no, everything seems quite all right here."

"It seems to me—you must excuse my interest, I am an old man, somewhat infirm, and a great part of my time is given to idle speculation on matters which interest me—it seems to me that there must have been some definite occurrence at Stansfield Grange, some extraneous circumstance, perhaps, which, so to speak, brought your fears to a *head*. Can you remember what it might have been?"

Miss Gilchrist pondered a moment, and then said, unexpectedly: "I

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think, you know, M. Pontarlier, it was the *nun*."

Before Poirot could take this up, Susan and her husband came in, closely followed by Helen.

A nun, thought Poirot. Now where in all this have I heard something about a nun . . .?

The family had all been polite to M. Pontarlier, the representative of U.N.A.R.C.O. And how right he had been to have chosen to designate himself by initials. Everyone had accepted U.N.A.R.C.O. as a matter of course—had even pretended to know all about it! He had become, as it were, a piece of foreign *décor*. The general opinion was that Helen should have avoided having him here this particular weekend, but as he was here they must make the best of it.

Fortunately, this queer little foreigner did not seem to know much English. Quite often he did not understand what you said to him, and when everyone was speaking at once he seemed completely at sea.

More or less forgotten by all, Hercule Poirot leant back in his chair, sipped his coffee and observed, as a cat may observe, the twitterings and comings and goings of a flock of birds. The cat that is not ready yet to make its spring. . . .

After twenty-four hours of prowling round the house and examining its contents, the heirs of Richard Abernethie were ready to state their preferences and if need be, to fight for them.

THE subject of conversation was, first, a certain Spode dinner dessert service which they had just been using.

"I don't suppose I have long to live," said Timothy in a faint, melancholy voice. "And Maude and I have no children. It is hardly worth while our burdening ourselves with useless possessions. But for sentiment's sake I *should* like to have the old dessert service. I remember it in the dear old days. I shall be *quite* content with that—and perhaps the Buhl cabinet in the white boudoir."

"You're too late, Uncle." George spoke with debonair insouciance. "I asked Helen to mark off the Spode service to me this morning."

Timothy became purple in the face. "Mark it off—mark it off? What do you mean? Nothing's been settled yet. And what do *you* want with a dessert service? You're not married."

"As a matter of fact, I collect Spode. And this is really a splendid specimen. But it's quite all right about the Buhl cabinet, Uncle. I wouldn't have that as a gift."

Timothy waved aside the Buhl cabinet. "Now look here, young George. You can't go butting in in this way. I'm an older man than you are—and I'm Richard's only surviving brother. That dessert service is *mine*."

He had become almost apoplectic until George, grinning, had given way. "Don't worry, Uncle Timothy, the Spode is yours. Just my idea of fun."

"Fun, indeed." Maude Abernethie was indignant. "Your uncle might have had a heart attack!"

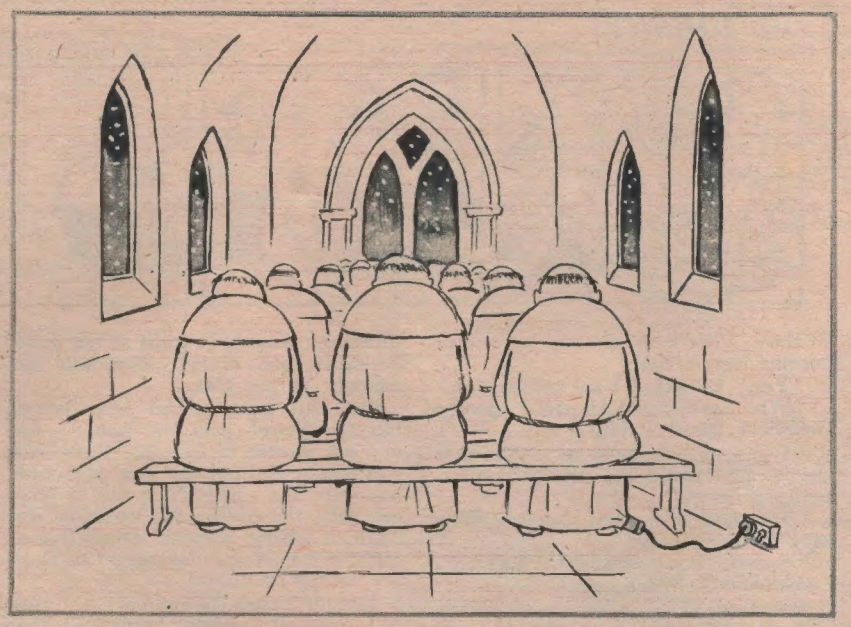
"Don't you believe it," said George cheerfully. "Uncle Timothy will probably outlive us all. He's what is known as a creaking gate."

By this time Timothy was so beyond himself he scarcely knew what he was saying.

"Timothy!" Maude stood up, solid, calm, a tower of forcefulness. "You have had a very trying evening. You must consider your health. I can't have you getting ill again. Come up with me. You must take a sedative and go straight to bed. Timothy and I, Helen, will take the Spode dessert service and the Buhl cabinet as mementos of Richard. There is no objection to that, I hope?"

Her glance swept round the company. Nobody spoke, and she marched out of the room supporting Timothy with a hand under his elbow, waving aside Miss Gilchrist, who was hovering half-heartedly by the door.

George broke the silence after they had departed. "*Femme formidable!*" he said. "That describes Aunt Maude exactly. I should hate ever to impede her triumphal progress."



Miss Gilchrist sat down again rather uncomfortably and murmured: "Mrs. Abernethie is always so kind."

The remark fell rather flat.

Michael Shane laughed suddenly and said: "You know, I'm enjoying all this! *The Voysey Inheritance* to the life. By the way, Rosamund and I want that malachite table in the drawing-room."

"Oh no," cried Susan. "*I* want that."

"Here we go again," said George, raising his eyes to the ceiling.

"Well, we needn't get angry about it," said Susan. "The reason I want it is for my new beauty shop. Just a note of colour—and I shall put a great bouquet of wax flowers on it. It would look wonderful. I can find wax flowers easily enough, but a green malachite table isn't so common."

"But, darling," said Rosamund, "that's just why *we* want it. For the new set. As you say, a note of colour—and so *absolutely* period."

"I see what you mean, Rosamund," said Susan. "But I don't think you've got as good a case as I have. You could easily have a painted malachite table for the stage—it would look just the same. But for my *salon* I've *got* to have the genuine thing."

MISS GILCHRIST hurried into placating speech. "This house is full of so many beautiful things," she said. "That green table would look wonderful anywhere, I'm sure. I've never seen one like it. It must be worth a lot of money."

"It will be deducted from my share of the estate, of course," said Susan.

"I'm so sorry—I didn't mean——" Miss Gilchrist was covered with confusion.

"It may be deducted from *our* share of the estate," Michael pointed out. "With the wax flowers thrown in."

"They look so right on that table," Miss Gilchrist murmured. "Really artistic. Sweetly pretty."

But nobody was paying any attention to Miss Gilchrist's well-meant trivialities.

Greg said, speaking again in that high, nervous voice: "Susan *wants* that table."

There was a momentary stir of unease, as though, by his words, Greg had set a different musical key.

Helen changed the conversation quickly. She turned to her foreign guest.

"I'm afraid this is all very dull for you, M. Pontarlier?"

"Not at all, madame. I consider myself privileged to be admitted to your family life." He bowed. "I would like to say—I cannot quite express my meaning—my regret that this house has to pass out of your hands into the hands of strangers. I hear that there was also the question of a school coming here? A convent, run by *religieuses*—by nuns, I think you say? You would have preferred that, perhaps?"

"Not at all," said George.

"The Sacred Heart of Mary," continued Poirot. "Fortunately, owing to the kindness of an unknown benefactor, we were able to make a slightly higher offer." He addressed Miss Gilchrist directly. "You do not like nuns, I think?"

Miss Gilchrist flushed and looked embarrassed.

"I simply can't imagine wanting to be a nun," said Susan.

"It's very becoming," said Rosamund. "You remember—when they revived *The Miracle* last year? Sonia Wells looked absolutely too glamorous for *words*."

"What beats me," said George, "is why it should be pleasing to the Almighty to dress oneself up in medieval dress. For, after all, that's all a nun's dress is. Thoroughly cumbersome, unhygienic and impractical."

"And it makes them look so alike, doesn't it?" said Miss Gilchrist. "It's silly, you know, but I got quite a turn when I was at Mrs. Abernethie's and a nun came to the door, collecting. I got it into my head she was the same as a nun who came to the door on the day of the inquest on poor Mrs. Lansquenet at Lytchett St. Mary. I felt, you know, almost as though she had been following me round! But it couldn't have been the same nun, for the other one was collecting for an organ for St. Barnabas's, I think, and this one was for something quite different: something to do with children."

"But they both had the same type of features?" Hercule Poirot asked. He sounded interested. Miss Gilchrist turned to him.

"I suppose that must be it. The upper lip—almost as though she had a moustache. I think, you know, that *that* is really what alarmed me—being in a rather nervous state at the time, and remembering those stories during the war of nuns who were really men and in the Fifth Column and landed by parachute. Of course, it was very foolish of me. I knew that afterwards."

"A nun would be a good disguise," said Susan thoughtfully. "It hides your feet."

"The truth is," said George, "that one very seldom looks properly at anyone. That's why one gets such wildly differing accounts of a person from different witnesses in court. There's usually *one* reliable observer, but one has to make up one's mind who that is."

"Another queer thing," said Susan, "is that you sometimes catch sight of yourself in a mirror unexpectedly and don't know who it is. It just looks vaguely familiar. And you say to yourself: 'That's somebody I know quite well. . . .' And then suddenly realize it's yourself!"

GEORGE said: "It would be more difficult still if you could really see yourself—and not a mirror image."

"Why?" asked Rosamund, looking puzzled.

"Because, don't you see, nobody ever sees themselves as they appear to other people. They always see themselves as a reversed image."

"But does that look any different?"

"Oh, yes," said Susan quickly. "It must. Because people's faces aren't the same both sides. Their eyebrows are different, and their mouths go up one side, and their noses aren't really straight. You can see with a pencil—who's got a pencil?"

Somebody produced a pencil, and they experimented, holding a pencil each side of the nose and laughing to see the ridiculous variation in angle.

The atmosphere now had lightened a good deal. Everybody was in a good humour.

Only Helen Abernethie remained silent and abstracted.

With a sigh, Hercule Poirot rose to his feet and bade his hostess a polite good night.

"And perhaps, madame, I had better say goodbye. My train departs itself at nine o'clock tomorrow morning. That is very early. So I will thank you now for all your kindness and hospitality. The date of possession—that will be arranged with the good Mr. Entwhistle. To suit your convenience, of course."

"It can be any time you please, M. Pontarlier. I—I have finished all that I came here to do."

"You will return now to your villa at Cyprus?"

"Yes." A little smile curved Helen Abernethie's lips.

Poirot said: "You are glad, yes? You have no regrets?"

"At leaving England? Or leaving here, do you mean?"

"I meant—leaving here."

"No—no. It's no good, is it, to cling on to the past? One must leave that behind one."

"If one can." Blinking his eyes

PEOPLE IN THE CASE

TIMOTHY ABERNETHIE— younger brother of the dead Richard Abernethie. A blustering old hypochondriac, affronted at not inheriting *all* his brother's money. Childishly dependent on *MAUDE*, his fussily devoted wife—a big, capable, tweedy woman.

HELEN ABERNETHIE — Richard's favourite; his brother Leo's widow. Fiftyish, charming and intelligent.

ROSAMUND SHANE — Richard's lovely, scatterbrained niece. With her vain, ambitious husband, *MICHAEL*, earns a precarious living from the stage.

SUSAN BANKS — Richard's other niece, who inherited his good business sense and strong personality. Married—in spite of family disapproval — to *GREGORY*, a neurotic, ineffectual chemist, who was once a patient in a mental home.

GEORGE CROSSFIELD — Richard's racy young nephew, who worked for a shady firm of solicitors, and—Mr. Entwhistle suspected—had been speculating with his clients' money.

CORA LANSQUENET — Richard's youngest sister, found brutally murdered with a hatchet at her country cottage the day after the funeral, by *MISS GILCHRIST*, her genteel, twittery companion-help.

innocently, Poirot smiled apologetically round at the group of polite faces that surrounded him.

"Sometimes, is it not, the past will not be left, will not suffer itself to pass into oblivion? It stands at one's elbow—it says: *'I am not done with yet.'*"

Susan gave a rather doubtful laugh.

"You mean," said Michael, "that your refugees when they come here will not be able to put their past sufferings completely behind them?"

"I did not mean my refugees."

"He meant us, darling," said Rosamund. "He means Uncle Richard and Aunt Cora and the hatchet, and all that." She turned to Poirot. "Don't you?"

Poirot looked at her with a blank face. Then he said: "Why do you think that, madame?"

"Because you're a detective, aren't you? That's why you're here. U.N.A.R.C.O., or whatever you call it, is just nonsense, isn't it?"

There was a moment of extraordinary tenseness. Poirot felt it, though he himself did not remove his eyes from Rosamund's lovely placid face.

He said, with a little bow: "You have great perspicacity, madame."

"Not really," said Rosamund. "You were pointed out to me once, in a restaurant. I remembered."

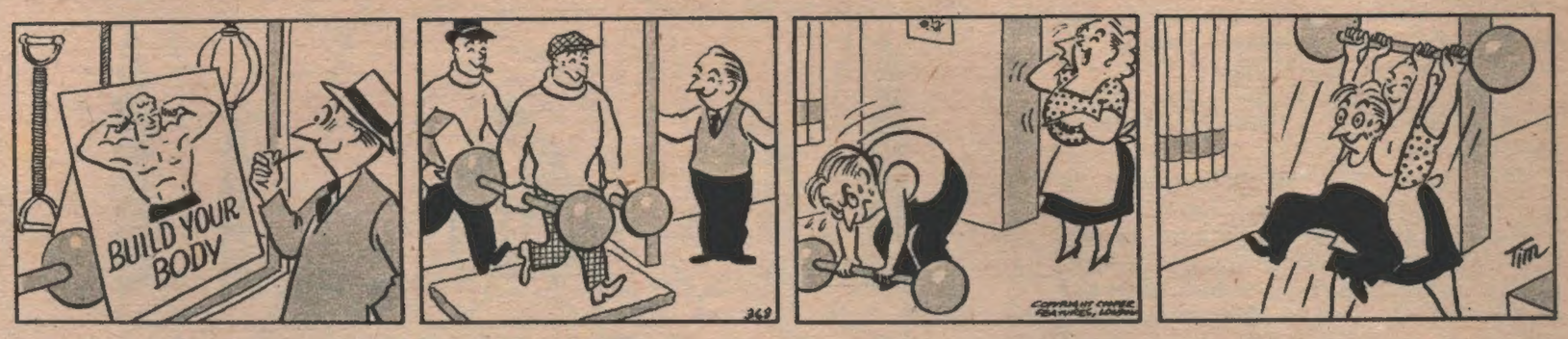
Michael said in an imperfectly controlled voice: "My—dear girl."

POIROT shifted his gaze to look at him. Michael was angry. Angry and something else—apprehensive? His eyes went slowly round all the faces. Susan's, angry and watchful; Gregory's, dead and shut in; Miss Gilchrist's, foolish, her mouth wide open; George, wary; Helen, dismayed and nervous.

All those expressions were normal ones under the circumstances. He wished he could have seen their faces a split second earlier, when the words "a detective" fell from Rosamund's lips. For now, inevitably, it could not be quite the same. . . .

He squared his shoulders and bowed

OH, JOHNNY! — *by TIM*



to them. His language and his accent became less foreign.

"Yes," he said. "I am a detective."

"Who sent you here?" George Crossfield asked loudly.

"I was commissioned to inquire into the circumstances of Richard Abernethie's death."

"He died a natural death. Who says anything else?"

"Cora Lansquenet said so. And Cora Lansquenet is dead herself."

A little wave of uneasiness seemed to sigh through the room like an evil breeze.

"She said it here—in this room," said Susan. "But I didn't really think——"

"Didn't you, Susan?" George Crossfield turned his sardonic glance upon her. "Why pretend any more? You won't take M. Pontarlier in."

"His name isn't Pontarlier," said Rosamund. "It's Hercules something."

"Hercule Poirot—at your service." Poirot bowed.

There was silence.

"May I ask what conclusions you have come to?" asked George.

"He won't tell you, darling," said Rosamund. "Or, if he does tell you, what he says won't be true." Alone of the company, she appeared to be amused. Hercule Poirot looked at her thoughtfully. . . .

Helen Abernethie, in her room, took some time in going to bed. She was thinking. Sitting in front of her dressing-table, she stared at herself unseeingly in the glass.

She had been forced into having Hercule Poirot into the house. She had not wanted it. But Mr. Entwhistle had made it hard for her to refuse. And now the whole thing had to come out into the open. No question any more of letting Richard Abernethie lie quiet in his grave. All started by those few words of Cora's. . . .

That day after the funeral. . . . How had they all looked? How had they looked to Cora? How had she herself looked? What was it George had said about seeing oneself?

There was some quotation, too. *To see ourselves as others see us.* As others see us. . . .

The eyes that were staring into the glass unseeingly suddenly focused. She was seeing herself—but not really herself. Not herself as others saw her. Not as Cora had seen her that day.

Her right—no, her left eyebrow was arched a little higher than the right. The mouth? No, the curve of the mouth was symmetrical. If she met herself she would surely not see much difference from this mirror image. Not like Cora.

Cora—the picture came quite clearly. Cora, on the day of the funeral, her head tilted sideways, asking her question, looking at Helen. . . .

Suddenly Helen raised her hands to her face. She said to herself: "It doesn't make sense. It can't make sense. . . ."

MR. ENTWHISTLE was roused from a deep sleep by the ringing of the telephone. It was not yet seven o'clock. Irritably, he pulled on a dressing-gown and made his way down to the phone.

"Hullo. Entwhistle speaking. Who is that? Oh—oh, its you, Helen."

"Yes. I'm terribly sorry to get you out of bed like this. But you did tell me once to ring you up at once if I remembered what it was that struck me as having been wrong—on the day of the funeral when Cora asked if Richard had been murdered."

"Ah! You *have* remembered?"

Helen said, in a puzzled voice: "Yes, but it doesn't make sense."

"You must allow me to be judge of that. Was it something you noticed about one of the people?"

"Yes. It seems absurd." Helen's voice sounded apologetic. "It came to me when I was looking at myself in the glass last night. Oh——"

The little startled half-cry was succeeded by a sound that came oddly through the wires—a dull, heavy sound that Mr. Entwhistle could not place at all. He said urgently: "Hallo! Hallo! Are you there? Helen! Are you there . . . ? Helen. . . ."

To be concluded next week

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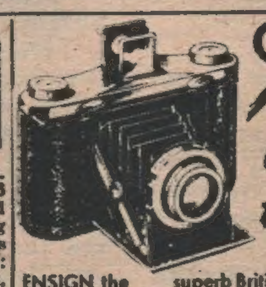

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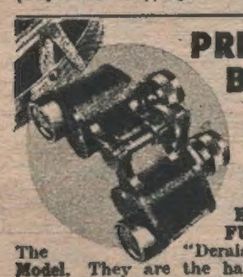

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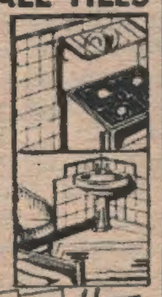

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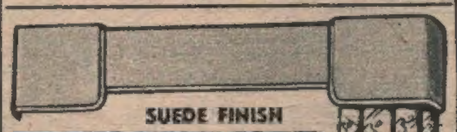

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COMMANDO!

Continued from page 15

been rushed from the north. These enemy troops resisted stubbornly until, at half past eleven on the morning of April 11, No. 6 Commando, with blood-chilling yells, raced with bared bayonets four hundred yards through the wood, fighting and killing as they went. At the day's end, three hundred Germans were dead in the wood, two hundred were prisoners.

The storming of the Elbe on April 29, was No. 1 Brigade's last battle in Europe. There was no more fight left in the Germans. Although the Brigade took part in the pursuit to the Baltic, hardly a further shot was fired in anger. A few days later, near Luneburg, I saw four German generals coming in to surrender to General Dempsey.

A small rug had been placed on a highly polished floor at the bottom of four steps the Germans would have to descend. "I hope they slip up," General Dempsey remarked grimly. "I'd like to see them take a fall." He didn't like the Germans much.

The enemy generals, moving with great care, disappointed Dempsey by retaining their dignity; but they left his room looking much less pompous than when they went in.

A Champagne Finale

I felt now I could relax my concentration on war. The race for the Two Thousand Guineas was approaching. Joe Lawson, the well-known trainer, had given me a tip that his horse, Court Martial, would win. Allan Peille wanted leave at this time. I told him he could have it if he went to Rheims on his way, picked up forty-eight bottles of champagne and took them to England. On arrival he was to lodge this wine with my bookmaker as my stake on Court Martial.

Good champagne was hard to lay hands on in Britain in May, 1945. My bookmaker valued the consignment at £200, laying me £1,000 to the forty-eight of champagne. When Court Martial won, I had the £1,000 awaiting me, plus my forty-eight bottles of champagne. This was a good bet. The champagne had cost me only £24. The customs man, in a victory mood, had not charged Allan Peille a penny duty. This meant I had won £1,000 for £24—forty to one on a five to one shot.

The following day I went to Lübeck and saw the 1st Commando Brigade comfortably established. It was the end of the war in Europe, and my first love, No. 3 Commando, had come through it gloriously.

In the last days of fighting, I had commandeered a German car, a B.M.W. Now, flying a brigadier's flag on its bonnet, I drove in it to Calais, on to the cross-Channel boat and, a few hours later, drove it off again on to English soil unopposed by the customs.

And that was it. My years in the Commandos had been full of laughter and tears; hell and high water; hard work, hard play, and taking what was coming. For me, in many ways, it had been a wonderful war. THE END

"Commando!" by Brigadier John Durnford Slater, D.S.O., is published in book form by William Kimber, price 15s.

LIFE WITH FATHER

Here is the missing person from the photograph on page 25—Ted Kavanagh, famous writer of "Itma" radio scripts, with his son Kevin.

BIG CHEQUES, SHOPPING CHALLENGE . . . on this £1,000 PAGE!

"MY wife and I are delighted with the splendid things we bought during that wonderful hour!" declares Mr. F. Phillips (2 Beachcroft Avenue, Southall, Middlesex), recent winner in *Bullets* of £500 plus JOHN BULL'S first £100 Shopping Challenge. Accepting that challenge—to spend £100 in one hour—Mr. Phillips, helped by his wife, beat the clock by one minute! You see them here, at a West End store, choosing a bedspread. Other purchases included luxury mattresses, blankets, Wilton carpet, rugs, vacuum cleaner, eiderdown, tea-set and toys. Win this week's £500 for a *Bullet* on your coupon below and be the next reader to receive a £100 Shopping Challenge!

Mr. and Mrs. F. Phillips accepted a shopping challenge—and won!

AWARDS VALUE OVER

£800

"BULLETS" 1st PRIZE for 2, 3 or 4 WORDS

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If you succeed, ALL PURCHASES ARE YOURS. If you fail, none. It's up to you!

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50 2-in-1 CORONATION SURPRISE SOUVENIRS
1,500 "Use-as-you-choose" Awards

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A fine roasting fowl accompanies each of the 20 chief prizes won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

HOW TO WIN

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

Hungry For Peace
The Red Giant
Is It Real, Or
Your Country
In Life's Obstacle Race
Riches Of Literature
Put Out The Flags And
Disheartening
Didn't Feel Safe
Game Of Patience
To Beat The Terrorist
Pressing On
Handled With Care
A Little Oversight
Speechless
With An Acid Look
He's An Artist, So
Hard-boiled Hiram
Patter Of Tiny Feet
At Sleepytown Station

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions

When We Get.....
Home From.....
Man She.....
Admiring The.....
Wouldn't Surprise.....
.....On The Road

NOTE.—You may enclose *Bullets* and Xword entries in same envelope covered by single P.O. for combined entry-fee. Mark envelope "COMBINED," top left-hand corner.

POST ENTRY

"Bullets," 1,883 (or Xword 835)," John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

"Bullets" Winners 1,878

FIRST PRIZE, £500 plus Coronation Visit: J. Dalford, 48 Oxford Road, Blackpool:

For Donkey's Years "Treadmill"—Suddenly, It's "Stairway"!

£50: B. Chaye, 5 Fendon Road, Cambridge: TO COMPLETE THE CORONATION—FLY-PAST—MOSCOW DOVES? £25: H. Spouncer, 34 Maple Tree Way, Scunthorpe: MUSIC HATH CHARMS, BUT—NEIGHBOUR'S "TOM," NO JENKINS'!

OTHER AWARDS: £10: J. Jenkins, 49 Oval Road, Erdington, Birmingham: FLOWER OF PEACE—NEEDS "*Stained* GLASS" PROTECTION. £9: Miss F. L. Oxberry, Castle Mount, Sunnyside, Kendal: A WOMAN'S EYES—SEE MORE—SAY MORE. £8: B. Baker, 96 Mather Avenue, Liverpool: A WOMAN'S TOUCH—MISSING—TOUCHES A WOMAN. £7: A. Phillips, 26 Spencer Street, Southall, Mddx: YOU CAN NEVER TELL, SO—SHAKE *Both* MALENKOV'S HANDS! £6: J. K. Hindley, 15 Trevor Road, Swinton, Lancs: A BIT ABSENT-MINDED—ROBOT—KISSED PROFESSOR'S TYPIST! £5: G. M. Adams, 13 Southfield Road, Oxford: WHEN GRANDPA WAS AT SEA—NORTH? EAST? WEST? *Southsea*! £5: W. Ewart, 3 The Ghyll, Maryport, Cumberland: BELONGS TO YOU—COUNTRYSIDE—DOES THAT *Litter*?

For ten winners of £2 10s., see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*. Winners of 50 Coronation Souvenirs and 1,500 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been notified.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are full rate. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s, if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests (in *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, dated May 23, and in JOHN BULL dated May 30), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, May 16, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,883 result.)

CASH AND CORONATION CAKES

This Way To Win

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues — XWORD 835

1. May clearly describe frightened hotel thief
2. This of a comedian is a sign of his success
3. Cutting of this may well call for special implement
6. What drunkard sometimes asks for
7. Let the average actress lose this and she'll make a scene
9. Such a companion can get on one's nerves
12. Kiddies rarely succeed in wearing them out
13. Great many are concerned with culture of some kind or other

Down Clues

1. In its drive for production, a firm shouldn't concentrate so much on hard work as to ignore this
2. It is more than doubtful if any good is derived from
4. Conveyance of this is rather tricky business
5. A striking one is naturally preferred
8. This on a window shows it's been neglected
10. Romantic one may easily make a night's walk a memorable one
11. By and large, the stronger this is, the greater the support given

£100 XWORD 1st PRIZE

AWARDS VALUE £25

among 1st Runners-up and up to

50 CORONATION CAKES

—one with each Runner-up Award value 10s. or over—to be received shortly before Coronation Day.

Up to 500 "SIGNPOST" PRIZES —one for each 2nd Runner-up

XWORD 830 RESULT

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Biting. 7, Crane. 8, Rent or Tent. 9, Dove. 12, Horse. 13, Stick. 14, Men. DOWN: 1, Black. 2, Nose. 3, Date. 4, Best. 5, Funny. 6, Band. 10, Odd. 11, Digs.

TWO £100 SHARERS: Mrs. E. A. Park, "Four Elms," Buckingham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea; R. Young, 62 Bridge Street, Pershore, Worcs. Winners also receive Coronation Cakes.

Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 30 entrants. Useful "Signpost" Prizes awarded to 2nd Runners-up.

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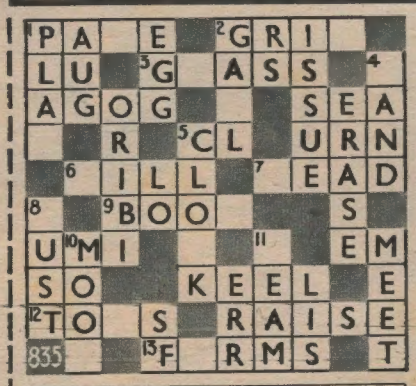

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

Puzzle and form strictly copyright **835** Closing Postmark MON., MAY 4

I enclose P.O. value ..... No. .....

Signed .....

Address.....

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In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.). Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.) and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.).

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated May 16.

Winner—Sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature indicates agreement to Rules.

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BULLET

EX. ..... 6d.

B.

EX. ..... 6d.

B.

EX. .....
B. ..... EXTRA TWO FOR 6d.
EX. .....
B.

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1,883 Closing Postmark MON., MAY 4

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STICK 2½d. STAMP here for "*Bulletin*"

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Ah! Kensitas—that's Good!

My car is sometimes obstinate
And won't go as it should—
But breakdown scowls soon change to smiles...
"Ah Kensitas—that's good!"

(Kensitas—the fresher, smoother cigarette)

He's sailed the world from East to West
But vows he always would
Return to what he likes the best—
A Kensitas—that's good!

(Kensitas taste better)

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